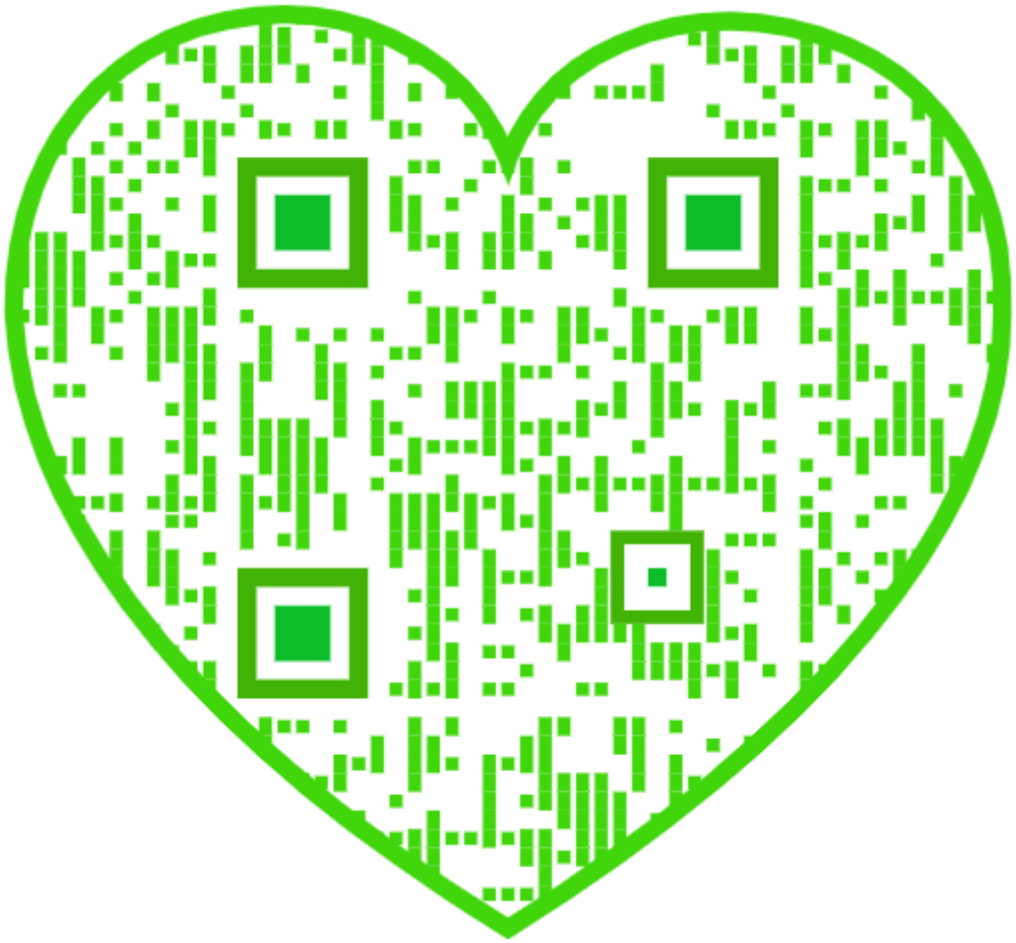

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AN INQUIRY

INTO THE

NATURE, FOUNDATION, AND EXTENT

OF

MORAL OBLIGATION,

INVOLVING THE

NATURE OF DUTY, OF HOLINESS, AND OF SIN.

BEING

AN INTRODUCTION

TO THE

STUDY OF MORAL SCIENCE IN ALL ITS BRANCHES,

INCLUDING THE

LEGAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND GOVERNMENTAL.

By DAVID METCALF.

"God is Love."—1 John 4: 8.
"Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."—Hebrews 12: 14.

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Allen and Farnham, Stereotypers and Printers.

TESTIMONIALS.

[*From Rev. George Allen, formerly Chaplain of the Insane Hospital, Worcester.*]

HAVING examined, with care, much of the Rev. Mr. Metcalf's *Inquiry into the Nature, Foundation, and Extent of Moral Obligation*, I would hereby confidently commend it to the perusal of all who take an interest in the investigation of that important subject. The work is the result of diligent research into the views and reasons of the ablest authors who have hitherto led the world in mental and moral science; and of that manly independence which calls no man master on earth.

The study of Mr. Metcalf's work would be a useful discipline of the mind in the course of its education; while its perusal by the adept in moral science would give assurance of the author's extensive learning and acute discrimination in regard to the subject he has taken in hand.

The catechetical method adopted by Mr. Metcalf, while it distinguishes his work from most if not all others on the subject, will commend itself as an aid both to the memory and the understanding of such as are discouraged from the study of intellectual and moral science in their usual forms.

WORCESTER, July 22, 1859.

[*From Rev. Noah Porter, D. D., Professor of Moral Philosophy, Yale College.*]

Rev. David Metcalf has read to me several chapters of the Treatise on Moral Obligation which he proposes to publish. He has evidently read extensively and thought carefully and independently on the subject, while his arguments and criticisms seem to me to be acute and able. I think his work will be both timely and useful. It is well fitted to awaken an interest in the subject of which it treats, and to excite to a thorough discussion of it.

YALE COLLEGE, September 26, 1859.

[*From Rev. Eleazar T. Fitch, D. D., Professor of Homiletics, Theological Department, Yale College.*]

The Rev. David Metcalf has read to me, from his manuscript, the general outlines, and distinct portions in full, of a work he has prepared on the subject of Moral Obligation.

The treatise I consider to be eminently worthy of perusal and attentive study. It presents a clear analysis of the subject. It shows

the various points which enter into the analysis to be true, in accordance with the dictates of reason and common sense, and the teachings of revelation.

The form of questions and answers in which the treatise is conducted, gives the writer opportunity to present to his readers the same points in different attitudes and relations, more fully than a severer method of sequence would have allowed him: — to take them round about the strength of Zion, as well as through it, and thus to mark well all her towers and bulwarks of defence.

This discussion is an interesting one to all who seek after vital truth, especially to teachers of moral science and religion; and is demanded, in order to clear away the fogs of indiscrimination, so often brought into the forum and the pulpit, which becloud the clear, shining light of reason and revelation.

New Haven, September 26, 1859.

[*From Professor James Bushee, Teacher of various Branches of Literature and Science.*]

Having read portions of Mr. Metcalf's work, in manuscript, on "*Moral Obligation*," it gives me pleasure to bear testimony in its favor.

Although it needs no other testimonials to commend its merits to public notice than those already given by Messrs. Allen, Porter, and Fitch, with which I cheerfully concur, yet I may perhaps add a word in reference to one or two points which seem worthy of notice.

The *originality of the plan*, and the *familiar interrogatory style* in which it is written, it seems to me, will do much towards introducing the subject to a more extensive class of readers, and thus render the work a valuable aid in extending this important department of knowledge.

Another feature of interest may be found in the judicious quotations, at the close of the discussion, of prominent topics, giving the critical student an opportunity of comparing the views of the most eminent writers upon the subject.

While Mr. Metcalf has succeeded, at least to some extent, in bringing this abstract and metaphysical subject within the comprehension of youth of ordinary capacity and attainments, and in adapting the work to class-room instruction, he has not diminished its adaptation to the wants of the *scholar;* since it embraces a more thorough and comprehensive analysis of the subject than any other work I have seen.

Worcester, Mass. June, 1860.

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TO THE READER.

INSTEAD of *merely* referring the reader to various authors for consultation, we have chosen rather to make liberal quotations, supposing that most of our readers might not have access to them and that many might not even have the time to consult them, and if they had, it would be a saving of time and labor to know definitely what particular statements we rely upon as the most important.

As the reader ponders the following pages, we ask him to consider, whether the principles thereon inculcated, carried to their legitimate results, would not abolish every tyrannical, arbitrary, and oppressive law throughout the world, and eradicate from the minds of the people and from the creeds of various churches many false doctrines now taught throughout Christendom. We have been repeatedly inquired of if our treatise is sectarian. We have not designed it to be so at all, but to be an investigation entirely independent of any sect and of all sects, and to be only such an investigation as the nature of the subject, viewed in the light of reason and of revelation, imperatively demands. If the truth affects one review, author, or denomination more unfavorably than others, so much the worse for all who are thus affected, till they bring their interests to accord with the interests of truth. Then the truth will make them free, so as to be free indeed, and thus the knowledge of the truth will result in their benefit.

If these principles tend to such results, it would be impossible to estimate how great the advantage would be, to have them early, intelligently, and distinctly established in the minds and hearts of our youth generally, to say nothing of people more advanced in life.

It may facilitate the understanding of our method, to notice that in some instances the answer to one question is contained in the answers

of a greater or less number of the succeeding questions, the whole treatise being an answer to the Inquiry into the Nature, Foundation, and Extent of Moral Obligation, together with the removal of objections to the doctrines laid down in the investigation.

We crave of the reader that he should have patience with our repetitions. Our apology for them is, the necessity of repeating the same thoughts, in order to show their bearing upon different parts of the subject, especially upon objections, that in this way the reader may have the evidence, in support of each important and separate point, clearly and distinctly before his mind, so that he may with more accuracy and certainty decide what is truth.

We have judged it best to make thorough work in removing objections wherever found, and by whomsoever maintained, in order that the reader may have opportunity and the means more fully to understand the principles inculcated, and to see and feel their power to cut a wide, straight, and plain path, in which the lover of truth and virtue may walk through abounding errors, to their final results in wisdom and knowledge and obedience to the truth, as revealed in the reason of man and in the *Word* of God.

We have also considered it important to remove particular objections in connection with the arguments by which they have been supported by their respective authors. This has occasioned an amount of repetition which we would gladly have avoided, if we could without loss.

If those readers who approve of the main points and arguments of this treatise will endeavor to extend a knowledge of them, either by promoting a circulation of the book, or by forming companies or classes for the study of its principles and general teachings, or in such other ways as they may deem expedient, ideas may be developed which will secure extensive and valuable results in the present and future ages, in this world and in that which is to come.

The reader is requested to notice that where words in this treatise are italicized in quotations, and the italicizing is preceded by a single bracket and not inclosed by another, the italicizing is done by the writer who quotes, and not by the original author.

A WORD TO REVIEWERS.

Gentlemen of the Quill, — If any of your honorable, highly useful and important profession should deign to notice our humble work,

and should judge that it deserves to be opposed, before you enter upon the work of opposing it, we have a right to hope that you will undertake the task of correctly understanding the true meaning we have intended to express in the doctrines laid down; and that you will also take a thorough and careful survey of the extent to which these doctrines have been sustained by the ablest minds in past ages.

We are aware that great and good men hold and teach opinions different from some of those expressed in the following treatise. If any one should discover any of our statements to be untrue, inaccurate, or inconsistent, and therefore of hurtful tendency, and will point out their defects, and set forth in clear and certain light the opposite truth, in the friendly and fraternal spirit of true benevolence, we will thank him beforehand; or perchance any shall choose to point out our errors in an opposite spirit, we say to him in advance, "*Fas est et ab hoste doceri*," or in plain English, we have a right to be taught even by an enemy. But let him who objects remember that it is a far easier task to find fault with the statements of other men, than, on difficult points, to make faultless statements ourselves.

If we can be convinced of important, substantial error, we will retract and sustain the opposite truth, as we have ability and opportunity. Mere dogmatism, or the *ipse dixit* of any one, we will not hold ourselves bound to notice or regard.

So great is our confidence that our doctrine is mainly true, that if the above suggestions should be complied with, in the exercise of a candid spirit searching for the truth, we think the doctrine of Benevolent Utility will be admitted as true by a vast majority of those who obtain a fair understanding of it. Nor can we say as an eminent author once said, that 'he did not expect his arguments to be more convincing to others, than theirs had been to him.'

It is our firm belief that, according to reason and the Holy Scriptures, the doctrine of Benevolent Utility, properly understood and explained, *is the chief corner-stone of moral science in all its branches, legal, theological, and governmental;* and that if the moral, political, religious, and theological teaching of the United States should be so modified as to be consistent with this doctrine, or even with the fundamental fact set forth and defended in this treatise, namely, that *duty lies within the limits of possibility*, it would more than double the value of that teaching and its efficacy to bless the nation and the world. We hope that those reviewers who admit the

truth of these points will lend their influence to establish them as firmly and as extensively as possible in the public mind.

Of those reviewers who think our teaching fundamentally erroneous, we have no favors to ask, only that they will as thoroughly as possible expose our errors and point out the truth, not forgetting *their* responsibility to explain the true nature, foundation, and extent of moral obligation. We trust that no honorable man will intimate that our teaching is erroneous, without pointing out the particular error into which he thinks we have fallen, and offering something better as a substitute, and which, being supported by better evidence, in his own judgment at least, accords with the truth. If the appropriate truth should be substituted for any of our errors, it would be a gain for which we should have occasion to rejoice. We hope the doctrine of Benevolent Utility will be discussed until the question of its truth shall be settled in the public mind throughout Christendom.

If the teaching of this treatise should be proved to have inaccuracies and inconsistencies to any supposable amount, and in consequence thereof, these imperfections, by some able hand, should be removed, and the exact truth should be brought into clear light and so become permanently established; or if an approximation to this should be made, our labor will not have been in vain.

PREFACE.

I KNOW that I am, and that something else is — that there is a world in which I am. In me and in the world around me, there is evidence which proves dependence upon a designing cause. From this, the inference is inevitable that there is an intelligent, personal God. I have learned from the teaching of God in my reason and in his revealed word, that I am to exist through the endless duration of eternity, — that my existence is to endure as long as the existence of God endures. And besides myself, I have learned that there are myriads of intelligent, rational beings destined also to live forever.

I am conscious of a desire of happiness, resulting from the very constitution of my being, — a pleasing hope, — a longing after blessedness and immortality. I learn that my fellow-beings have desires similar to that of my own.

Now, therefore, I want to know what I can do to secure my own highest blessedness for the whole duration of my existence. And I desire also, to know what I can do to promote the highest amount, the greatest sum total, of happiness in the universe of intelligent beings, for the whole duration of *their* existence. I want to know how to secure for myself, and as far as I can for my fellow-beings, this one needful thing — this eternal well-being — the end for which we were made.

I want also to know, and I desire that my fellow-men should know, what each and all intelligent beings can do to promote the most valuable amount of happiness, both in kind and degree, for each and all rational beings in the universe, for the whole duration of eternity. In short, *to this end*, I want to know and to make known the true nature, foundation, and extent of moral obligation, — the true nature of holiness and sin, as they are distinguished from each other, and from every other object of thought. To supply this want is the object of the following investigation.

The investigation of this subject in past ages, has occupied many of the ablest and best minds in the world. And the number of those who apply their best powers to this inquiry is still increasing. That the public mind feels a deep and growing interest in the nature of moral obligation, is made manifest, among other things, by the frequent discussion of the subject in our ablest periodicals, and in the works of the ablest authors, as well as by the attention paid to it in our colleges and theological seminaries.

This continual discussion in published works evinces also, that the subject has never been fully and satisfactorily explained, or that, if such explanation as ought to satisfy was ever made, it has been lost, or not duly appreciated.

The more fully the fundamental principles of moral obligation are understood, and the more familiar they are made in the public mind, the greater will their power become, to control the public morals, and to secure the general well-being.

In the following discussion we have endeavored to obtain and to give such a definition of holiness and sin, as will clearly distinguish them from each other and from every other conceivable thing. We have had it in view to find and make manifest the

"*pou sto*" — the place whereon to rest the moral lever, by which a sinful world is to be raised from its moral degradation and debasement. Our attempt mainly has been to define holiness and sin in the concrete, i. e. as they exist in holy and sinful acts, so as to distinguish virtuous acts from all acts of the soul which are not virtuous, especially from sinful acts, and to show that moral obligation is that, which requires rational beings to *aim* at the promotion of the highest general good and well-being, — that holiness is the necessary and most excellent means of the most excellent happiness, and is therefore a utility, — that holiness and universal, impartial benevolence are one and the same thing, precisely identical, and that all sin is selfishness, and that all selfishness is sin, — that sin is the most efficacious cause of misery, and is therefore a detriment. If holiness and sin can be defined correctly, as they exist — in the concrete — in holy and sinful acts, since they are performed and actually can exist only in the concrete, and never in the abstract, the remaining question, What is holiness in the abstract? would appear to be of minor consideration. The importance of this latter question apparently lies chiefly, if not entirely, in its bearing on the question, What are virtuous acts? Therefore, if we can know fully and adequately what moral obligation is, and what are virtuous acts, we can afford, without any great and essential loss, to leave the abstract question to those who are fond of mere abstractions.

There is a common and truthful proverb, that it is easier to ask questions than to answer them. It is equally true, that a question skilfully framed goes far in suggesting the right answer. Questions correctly presented have a great advantage in exciting the attention, and in fixing the mind on the precise point of inquiry and investigation. They excite, encourage, and enable the mind to use more successfully its own powers to discover the

truth sought, and to know it with greater certainty. Such questions awaken inquiry, and put the mind on the right track in the pursuit of truth.

By questions and answers, instruction more clear and definite may be given, perhaps, than in any other way. The more clear and definite and certainly true, instruction is made to appear, the more deeply the truth communicated will be implanted in the mind, and the more easily and permanently it can be retained in the memory; and therefore, the more powerful its influence will be in the formation both of the intellectual and moral character.

There is yet another advantage arising from questions candidly and carefully proposed, which is worthy of regard. They have a decided tendency to conciliate the mind of the reader and inspire him with confidence in the author, and to lead him to devise the true answer, if, in his judgment, that is not given by the author. These are some of the reasons why this method has been adopted in the following pages.

When it was recommended to us to undertake this work, the inquiry arose, What class of readers shall be addressed? and the conclusion was, that by a thorough and somewhat extensive examination of the statements of others, and by carefully weighing our own words, we would make our statements as free as we could from error and from objections to minds of the keenest logical discrimination, and at the same time to make our meaning as plain as possible to the largest class of persons.

To this end, we have endeavored to avoid such metaphysical niceties as are too subtile to be comprehended by common sense. To write hastily and to publish what is thus written on such a theme, would be an offence to the public deserving

earnest reprehension. But, notwithstanding all the care we have taken, it must not be presumed that there is no inaccuracy, inconsistency, or error in the statements we have made. But if we have advanced error upon the *main* points, the way is open for some abler hand to prove it, to show what the truth is, and to make known better principles, on the ground of which different theories may be reconciled, and whatever of truth these theories contain may be made consistently to appear, and thus to advance the science of virtue. 'If we could in any way perform the more than Herculean task of destroying the invisible power of opinions held in past times by other men, as well as of our own former opinions and feelings, and build anew, and in the right use of reason, on the solid basis of facts, we might reap the full reward of our labor in the consciousness of having discovered the truth.' Former writers upon morals labored under a great disadvantage from an incorrect mental philosophy, which is now in some degree removed. It is not to be expected that a correct system of ethical science will generally prevail until a more correct and complete psychology is permanently established.

The names by which doctrines are called often raise a prejudice against them, and in various ways cause them to be misunderstood, and for these reasons they become obnoxious to the popular mind. It is desirable, therefore, that the name of a doctrine should designate its true character, so as fairly to distinguish it from all other doctrines.

That which we regard as the true doctrine on the nature of virtue may with propriety be designated the doctrine of *benevolent utility*, or *benevolent rectitude*, or *universal benevolence*. By these terms the true doctrine is purposely distinguished, 1. From the theory that mere undesigned utility is

virtue; 2. From all the theories that involve selfishness as an element of virtue; 3. From all the forms of utilitarianism which discard impartial, universal, and disinterested benevolence; 4. From all the theories which deny that benevolence includes rectitude and all that is holiness; 5. From all the theories which deny that utility is an element in the foundation of obligation; 6. And from all those which maintain that holiness is an end, but not a means, — that it is an ultimate end in and of itself, having no end ulterior to itself; 7. And from the notion that the idea of virtue or right is a simple idea.

The doctrine of Benevolent Utility we understand to be the doctrine of both the Edwardses,* Hopkins and Dwight, of the New England theology generally, and of the Bible. We believe that every result to which we have arrived is justified by the principles laid down by Bishop Cumberland, Bishop Butler, and by the elder Edwards, in his two great dissertations on God's Last End in Creation, and on the Nature of Virtue, and still more definitely stated in the works of the younger Edwards.

In the preface, and by the editor of these dissertations, it is set forth that they were designed for the learned, and that the manner in which the subjects are treated is somewhat above the level of common readers.

Our object has been to simplify and render the discussion less abstruse, and, if possible, by the aid of an improved psychology, to bring the subject more within the comprehension of the common mind. Fully to understand Edwards, requires an amount of labor which we apprehend few are willing to bestow.

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* Both the Edwardses, father and son, were named Jonathan, and were college presidents; the son only had the title of D.D.

The principles contained in these dissertations of President Edwards have for a long time constituted the key-note of the New England theology, notwithstanding all the opposition with which they have been and still are assailed; and if we rightly judge, these principles are destined to be regarded as fundamental, in a true moral and theological system, till the end of time.

We ask not our readers to adopt opinions on the authority of great names, either of individuals or of large bodies of men, however renowned for wisdom and knowledge. "Truth is learned only at the pure fountains of *evidence*. Authority does not create it; dogmatism recommends it not; neither does violence impose it: from such taskmasters conscience retreats, that she may hear, in the still silence of her musings, the voice of God."

"The honest advocate of truth, while inculcating it upon others, will be mindful of this only process of conviction. He will quietly conduct them by his reasonings to the sources of evidence, that truth may captivate them by her own persuasive energies."

We have been induced to undertake this investigation, in part, by the hope of doing something to ascertain the true ground on which the different theories of the nature, foundation, and extent of moral obligation, so far as these theories contain portions of the true doctrine, may be reconciled with each other, and on which the moral forces of the good, especially of the teachers of virtue, can be united for the spread of holiness, and the speedy establishment of its dominion over the world. Our aim and hope is to guide the reader to the original fountain of eternal rectitude and holiness — to the primary source and rule of moral, spiritual life — and to show what are,

and how to lay, the foundations of many generations. We invite the attention of those who know how, and are not afraid, to reason.

The want of union of views which prevails among authors and teachers of ethical science (that which is taught by one author and in one seminary being so much dissented from and opposed by others), is to be seriously deprecated. On this account (it is believed), the cultivation of both intellectual and moral science is discouraged, and of course progress in these departments of knowledge is seriously retarded.

If there could be effected a full or even a substantial agreement in the truth upon the elements of morality among our authors and teachers in the various schools and institutions of learning in the land, an inestimable advantage would be gained over the present condition of affairs in relation to this subject. No small amount of error would be avoided, which now has to be learned, and then has to be either unlearned or retained in its darkening and bewildering influence upon the mind, retarding the progress of knowledge and virtue, promoting divisions and sectarianism of various kinds, and, with all this, *a vast waste of mind in opposing mind.* Union in the truth among the teachers of truth, especially of the elements and first principles of truth, would vastly increase its power over the public mind.

IDEAS, if they do not exert an absolute and irresistible control over the minds and actions of men, still have an influence, too vast to be measured, for weal or woe, over the affairs of the world. Of all the *ideas* that can be conceived of, not one can be compared, in the power, permanency, and extent of its influence, with that of right as distinguished from wrong, in its relations to happiness and misery, throughout this world and

the world to come. What has given to any truly reformatory cause its main power, but the idea of right?

This idea, with its corresponding reality, constitutes the firm foundation of the throne of God. Any government not founded on RIGHT and sustained by *righteousness*, must sooner or later be overthrown, and remembered only in disgrace. If our attempt to unfold this idea and render it familiar to the public mind, and thus to increase its power over men, shall prove in some good degree successful, we shall never regret the labor it has cost us, but have occasion for great rejoicing and thankfulness to the Giver of every blessing.

The results of our labors are now commended to the friends and teachers of truth and virtue, to the enemies of error and sin, and to all who labor and pray for the prevalence of sound science and sound religion in all our schools of learning, and everywhere else among men; and to the blessing of Him whose holiness is perfect, whose benevolence is impartial, universal, and infinite; whose favor is life, and who has determined that truth and righteousness shall pervade the earth.

WORCESTER, Mass., January, 1860.

NATURE AND FOUNDATION

OF

MORAL OBLIGATION.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY STATEMENTS AND DEFINITION OF TERMS.

One of the greatest and most obvious difficulties, which writers on the nature of moral obligation meet with, is to find suitable terms definitely to express their meaning, and at the same time such terms as their opponents cannot pervert, or turn away from their true and proper meaning. This difficulty arises, in part, from the want of terms sufficiently adapted to metaphysical discussion, and to express with metaphysical accuracy our ideas on a subject so abstruse and so much controverted, as is the nature of virtue.

1. What method, then, is it necessary to adopt, to avoid as much as possible this difficulty arising from the want of terms?

To make our meaning clear and definite, and to prevent as much as possible its perversion, in treating upon so difficult a subject as the nature and foundation

of virtue, it is necessary carefully to select and accurately to define the principal terms employed, and at the same time to define and use terms in that sense which is established by the best authority, and to make but a sparing use, if any, of metaphorical language.

2. In what way can we know, with unfailing certainty, that our conclusions are true?

In order that we may be fully certain that our conclusions, derived from a process of reasoning, are true, in the first place we must know that our premises are accurate and true. They must be either the first principles of truth, or they must have their foundation in, and be the legitimate results of, those principles. And then we must proceed step by step, with intuitive certainty, until we arrive at the legitimate conclusion. But if we cannot proceed with intuitive and absolute certainty, in each and every step, then we should come as near to it as we can, and thus have our conclusions as near certain as is practicable.

3. Why is it necessary to assume the premises of an argument as true, without attempting to prove them to be true?

The premises of an argument *must* be assumed as true, because, from the nature of an argument, no other way is possible. If we attempt to prove our premises by a previous argument, we must assume the premises of this previous argument, and so on forever. So that the only possible way to begin an argument is to assume the premises as true, without proof or needing proof. If he, to whom you would communicate knowledge, cannot perceive the truth of your premises, he cannot legitimately gain either knowledge or wisdom by your arguments, and, therefore, you may as well leave him to himself, because he cannot be legitimately convinced

by an argument, until he can perceive the truth of the premises.

To him who knows nothing, nothing can be communicated, either by argument or by any affirmation expressed in language. If you say to a man, God is good, he cannot understand what you mean, unless he has some knowledge of God and of what goodness is. If you undertake to prove to him, that God is good, by the fact that he has sent us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, — that in this way he has fed us by the bounties of his providence, and thus filled our hearts with gladness, if he does not know what gladness is, then he cannot understand your argument, and if he does not know, and cannot believe, that God has sent us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, then of course your argument can have no weight in his judgment, and therefore, it will not and cannot carry any legitimate conviction to his mind. Your argument can afford no evidence to his mind that God is good. But if he knows what gladness is, by having felt it in his own soul, and if he perceives that he has been made glad, by the rain and fruitful seasons, which God has sent from heaven, for the purpose of making his creatures happy, then he can understand what the goodness of God is, by perceiving that it has by the design of God made him glad, and then he will be able to appreciate the force of your argument to prove the goodness of God.

That no argument can be framed without first assuming the premises of it, was well illustrated by the famous attempt of the eminent French philosopher Des Cartes, not to assume or admit any thing which he had not first proved, in which he thus began, "I think, therefore I am." By the word I, the first word he uttered, he assumed the truth which he meant to

prove. Unless he knew that *I existed*, he had no ground to affirm, I think. *I* must exist in order to think, but I cannot think (before I exist), in order to exist.

4. Is such power as is adequate to fulfil moral obligation, necessary to the existence of such obligation? and is this a first principle in morals?

That power fully adequate to fulfil moral obligation is necessary to the existence of such obligation, is an essential truth, and it is one of the first and fundamental principles, on which all correct reasoning upon morals is, and necessarily must be, founded. All reasoning based on its denial must lead to false conclusions.

That what ought to be done can be done, and that what ought to be avoided can be avoided, is a prime and self-evident principle in moral truth. All duties are possibilities, and therefore no impossibilities can be duties. In all cases sin is that which can be avoided. Power adequate to fulfil the demands of duty is essential to the foundation on which all moral obligation must rest, or not exist.

That which a person by the best use of his powers is unable to do, he can be under no moral obligation to do.

5. What is implied in this power adequate to fulfil moral obligation?

This adequate power of a moral being implies, (1.) That he has a sufficient *opportunity* to fulfil such obligation. (2.) That he has the knowledge of, or the ability and means of knowing some rule of duty, which he is under obligation to obey, or to him that obligation cannot exist. Therefore, present obligation can never exceed present ability; duty always does, and must, lie within the limits of possibility, or, in the precise and definite language of Bishop Butler, "Moral obligations can extend no further than to natural possibilities." The truth

of this principle is affirmed by the universal reason of mankind, and is self-evident. Nothing *plainer* can be affirmed to prove it, and nothing *more evident* can be affirmed to disprove it. Every man acts, and must act, under the influence of this truth. If I do not know this truth with certainty, then it is in vain for me to claim that I *do* or *can know* any thing.

Taking the principle, that what ought to be done can be done, for the first rule to guide us,

6. What is the second fundamental principle, which must be regarded in all right reasoning upon moral obligation?

A second fundamental moral principle, which must be regarded in all reasoning upon moral obligation, in order to come to right and just conclusions, is that *all the* GOOD *which can be done ought to be done.*

To unite these two principles in one rule, *all* and *only* that good which *can* be done ought to be done.

7. What are the essential characteristics of this principle?

To the essential nature of this principle, three characteristics belong. It is Eternal, Immutable, and Universal.

(1.) Eternal, without beginning or end. It never had a cause, or any kind of dependence; it is, therefore, unoriginated, necessary, and absolute in its own nature.

(2.) Immutable. It cannot be changed, amended, or destroyed.

(3.) It is universal, obligatory upon all moral beings.

8. What, then, is the moral constitution of the universe?

This principle, that *all* and *only* that GOOD which can be done ought to be done, is the primary, fundamental, original law, and *ultimate* rule of all moral obligation,

of duty, of right, of justice, and of all righteous doing. It is the moral constitution of the universe, which never can be changed or amended, according to which all righteous moral government must proceed, and in accordance with which, all righteous law must be made, and by which all righteous execution of law must be forever controlled.

The laws and commandments of God are all based upon this moral constitution, and are made in accordance with it. They are explications of it, and they are the applications of it, made by Infinite Wisdom, to the various relations of moral beings to each other and to their Creator.

This principle is not dependent on any will, nor on any number of wills, but, without qualification or exception, it is, and forever will be, and must be universally binding on all intelligent wills throughout the universe. No kings nor autocrats, no rulers, no majorities, not all the people, nor all judges of the earth, combined with all the rulers and all the people together, can either change or annihilate it. What all that *good is*, which can be done, is a point to be considered in its proper place, particularly in chapter 5, and in the sequel. These two principles thus united in one rule, must, therefore, by a *rightful* AUTHORITY, be the guide of our inquiries, into the nature, foundation, and extent of moral obligation, — into the nature of duty, of holiness and sin, and then, if our reasoning is correct, this principle will be an eternal, unchangeable, and immovable support of our doctrine of moral obligation, of duty, of holiness and sin, and then the principle and doctrine must both stand together, and stand forever. Neither can fall without the other.

This great principle, fully and rightly developed in its

application to all cases of duty, of right and wrong, comprehends, and is coextensive with, moral law. It is the ultimate and perfect rule, standard, and test of all justice, of all right and wrong in moral acts and moral character, of all moral obligation, moral law, and moral government, from which there is no appeal.

9. What idea is signified by the term *moral*, when used to express a quality of the acts, doings, and character of rational beings?

(1.) The term moral, when applied to the acts, doings, and character of rational beings, expresses that quality which renders those acts, doings, and character either holy or sinful, worthy of approbation or disapprobation, praise or blame, reward or punishment. In this sense of moral, the term expresses a quality which is predicable only of those acts, doings, or character of rational beings, for which they are responsible under a moral government.

(2.) In this same sense, moral quality is predicable only of voluntary character, acts, and doings, i. e. acts of will or choice, so that, therefore, nothing in this sense is moral, either holy or sinful, right or wrong, which is not voluntary. All moral quality lies in, or is immediately connected with, voluntariness, — free, unnecessitated choice.

(3.) All moral acts are of the will, voluntary; they are choices which rational beings make between the various objects of choice, all the objects of their choice being different kinds of happiness, and the real or supposed means, sources, or causes, including capacities, of happiness within their power; no other moral choice, aside from choice between these objects, from the unchangeable nature both of moral agents and of moral agency, being possible.

10. What is meant, in this discussion, by the phrase, means of happiness?

When the sense requires it, the phrase, means of happiness, is to be understood as including the sources, causes, and capacities of happiness; i. e. all that is essential to the existence of happiness. This is said here to be borne in mind in the future discussion.

11. What idea is expressed by the term moral, when applied to obligation?

Moral obligation is that which requires and obligates rational beings to perform moral acts of a certain description, and to abstain from moral acts of the opposite kind. It is that by which they are bound to choose, according to the best light and knowledge within their reach, the best and most efficacious means of doing all the good in their power. Moral obligation not only arises from a relation, but is itself a relation, between a moral being and the objects or ends which duty requires him to promote.

12. What is a moral relation?

A moral relation is one that implies moral obligation.

13. What is a moral agent?

A moral agent is one who has power to perform moral acts, in obedience or disobedience to a known law. Or, a moral agent is one who, having the requisite power, knowledge, and opportunity to obey a known rule of duty, can obey or transgress; i. e. having both in his power, he can do either, obey or transgress a known law.

14. What is moral law?

Moral law is a rule of duty to be done, — a rule of voluntary action to moral agents, which rule points out to such agents, and with a rightful authority re-

quires of them such moral acts as are best adapted, and because they are best adapted and most efficacious, to produce the most valuable amount of general well-being, which those agents can promote by the best use of all their powers.

The laws of voluntary action which can be disobeyed, but which *ought* to be obeyed, are moral laws. Those laws which can *not* be disobeyed *are not moral laws.*

Moral laws should be carefully distinguished from all such laws as can by no possibility be disobeyed, but must inevitably be obeyed; e. g. (1.) The law of gravitation. In all the voluntary movements of our material frame, we must act under the influence of this law, and in obedience to it; not voluntarily, but by necessity. This law compels us to travel on solid ground, and not in bee-lines through the air.

(2.) Again. It is a universal law, that rational mind must think. By no possibility can all thought be avoided.

(3.) That mind must choose when objects of choice are presented; that is, it must accept or reject, choose or refuse — there is no alternative. From this law there is no possibility of escape.

(4.) It is a law, imposed by an invincible necessity of his nature upon every rational, sentient, voluntary being, that in all his voluntary action, he must seek happiness. To escape from the dominion of this law is an absolute impossibility. (Compare q. 114.)

(5.) Any law that is or can be irresistibly enforced, is not moral law. That action which is necessitated by an irresistible necessity, is not obedience to moral law.

15. What is moral influence?

(1.) Moral influence is the influence of motives. It is that which draws, invites, or tends to move or induce a moral agent to do right or wrong. That which tempts to sin or allures to holiness, that which presents or impresses motives to moral action, is moral influence.

(2.) The influence of mind over mind by the presentation and impression of motives, whether accomplished by truth or error, is moral influence.

Moral influence is expressed by the following forms of language. 'The power and force of truth — the efficacy of the Gospel — the energy of the Divine Word — the melting influence of the character of Christ — the subduing force of the attributes of God — the influence of eternal rewards and eternal penalties — the might of eloquence — the persuasive strength of motives — the vigor of appeals — the overwhelming power of outward temptation — the exciting, inviting, inciting, alluring, persuading, inducing, attracting influence of motives presented to the mind in objective truths — the enticing, tempting, seducing, instigating, prompting, alluring, persuasive influence of motives presented to the mind in objective errors and false doctrines.' *

(3.) Moral influence is the influence of motives which can be resisted. By this it is meant that when contrary motives — motives which oppose each other — are exciting the mind to act in different directions, the mind has the power to resist and overcome either set of motives, and comply with the other. And thus the mind has, within itself, the power to decide what voluntary actions it will perform, and what not.

16. What is moral government?

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* Bib. Sacra, 1853, p. 402.

(1.) Moral government is the moral influence of mind over mind, exerted in the administration of moral law over moral agents, by means of the motives arising from the necessary sanctions of law, consisting of rewards and penalties.

(2.) A righteous moral government is the exercise of authority in administering and upholding righteous moral law, by the moral influence of rewards and penalties, for the purpose of promoting in the highest degree the welfare of its subjects, by securing the fulfilment, by moral agents, of their obligations to obey moral law, which requires them to promote the greatest universal good.

17. What is moral character?

Moral character is that which every moral being forms for himself, by the moral acts which he performs, under the moral influence of motives, and by the choice which he makes of the supreme object of his love and pursuit.

18. What is meant by the nature, foundation, and extent of moral obligation?

The *nature* of moral obligation is determined by and consists in that which a moral agent is required by his duty to do; e. g. to promote highest happiness.

By the nature of moral obligation, we mean that demand which arises from the nature and relations of rational, voluntary beings, that they should promote the greatest amount of happiness in their power.

The *foundation* of moral obligation consists in, and includes all, that is essential to the possibility of moral action. This possibility includes all that is necessarily implied in the power of right moral action; all that is implied in the intrinsic value of the ultimate good

sought in such action, as well as in the power of seeking that good and of promoting it as an ultimate end.

In this Inquiry, by the foundation of moral obligation we mean, not any one thing alone that may be essential to the existence of such obligation, not merely the ground of obligation that is found in the intrinsic value of the good which constitutes the ultimate object of virtue, but *all* those powers of mind and those qualities of things that are absolutely essential to the possibility of making a virtuous choice, — or of forming a right predominant or supreme intention, or of forming a holy character. This sense of the term appears to have been long established by the best usage, and by some of the ablest authors, ancient and modern.

By the *extent* of obligation, we mean the *amount* of duty required, which is to be measured by the powers of each moral agent to promote the ultimate object of moral action, viz. happiness.

19. What is the meaning of eligible, infallible, unfailing, impossible, impossibility, invincible, certain, certainty, and necessity?

Eligible means possible to be chosen; to be eligible an object must be that which may be desired — that which cannot be desired, cannot be chosen.

Infallible — *cannot* fail. Unfailing — *certain* never to fail.

Impossible and *impossibility* are sometimes used to mean certain and certainty not to be, but commonly in a quite different sense of cannot be, no power to be, impossible to be for the want of actual power to be or to be done.

Invincible — cannot be overcome or conquered.

Certain, certainty. That which is certain to be *will be*, whether there is power to prevent it or not. There

may be a power able to prevent, although it certainly will not prevent that which is certain to be. We believe the sun is certain to rise to-morrow, but still God has power to prevent it. He once caused the sun and moon to stand still.

Necessity sometimes means needfulness, indispensable requisiteness; but more commonly that which must be, either by an irresistible causation, or because there is no supposable power to the contrary, as time and space. To use the term necessity in the sense of mere certainty, is bad usage.

If when these terms and terms like these are used, the sense in which they are used should be definitely fixed, it would aid essentially in precision of thought and the accurate perception of truth.

CHAPTER II.

HOLINESS AND SIN DISTINGUISHED FROM EACH OTHER AND FROM EVERY OBJECT OF THOUGHT, EXCEPT THE ACTS OF MORAL AGENTS. — OTHER TERMS DEFINED.

The main object of this chapter is to show that moral quality is predicable only of the acts of moral agents. To accomplish this object, we begin with the question, —

20. What is virtue?

Virtue is the same with moral goodness, moral worth or worthiness, moral excellence, holiness, rectitude, and righteousness. But these are only synonymous terms, and constitute no real or logical definition, and, therefore, the question remains to be presented again.

21. What is holiness?

Holiness is the moral opposite of sin. Holiness and sin are opposed to each other. Between them there is an entire antagonism. That which promotes one prevents the other. The triumph of one is, for the time, the suspension or the overthrow of the other. Their natural and final results are as opposite as their natures and tendencies. One results in happiness, the other results in misery. The tendency of each is to thwart the tendency of the other, and to an indefinite extent they do thwart each other's influence. One exalts to glory and honor, the other debases and leads to dishonor, shame, self-condemnation, remorse, and everlasting contempt.

22. What are the natural opposites, which correspond to the moral opposites of holiness and sin?

Happiness and misery are the corresponding natural opposites, which result from holiness and sin. That which promotes one hinders the other.

23. In what other respects are holiness and sin moral opposites?

Holiness is that which reason and conscience demand, which deserves approbation, praise, and reward, and which carries along with it the conviction of obligation, — a conviction that it can and ought to be done.

Sin is that which reason and conscience forbid and condemn, — that which deserves disapprobation, blame, and punishment, and should carry along with it a sense of obligation to the contrary, — a perception of ought not, a conviction that it can and ought to be avoided.

Holiness is that which God requires, in the moral law made known by his works and word, and which, if persevered in, he will reward with everlasting happiness.

Sin is that which God's law forbids, and for which he will inflict upon the incorrigible transgressor the deserved penalty, — such a penalty as is adequate to sustain his authority as lawgiver. Here, again, the question returns, —

24. What is that virtue which God and our consciences demand and approve, and what is sin, its opposite, as distinguished from every created thing, and from every unoriginated thing that is what it is by the necessity of nature?

As distinguished from every created thing, and from every unoriginated thing that can be conceived of, virtue and its opposite, holiness and sin, must consist in the acts of a *living* agent. They do, and must, consist in acts of mind, in distinction from mind itself, and from its nature and powers, and from all its constitutional properties.

Created or inherited constitution, and moral character which can be formed by moral acts alone, are entirely distinct from each other. Nothing that belongs to mind, in distinction from its acts, can be virtue or sin. Mind can no more be virtuous or vicious, in being what it is caused to be by creative power, or by any other irresistible causation, than matter can be, by being what it was created. That for which a moral being is deserving of approbation or disapprobation, reward or penalty, is an act, in distinction from every created thing, substance, or being, and from the created nature of every existing thing or being, and from every created element or quality of every substance, whether it be matter or mind, material or immaterial.

It is no unoriginated object of thought, that is what it is by an uncaused necessity. It is neither time nor space, figure nor dimension, quantity nor number, nor

any thing that belongs to mathematical truth of any kind.

We have made this particular and minute statement, that our premises may be distinctly understood and carefully remembered. As thus distinguished, both holiness and sin must be the acts of a living agent, who has the power necessary to perform moral acts, and of course these acts must be originated by the agent's own power.

25. What is the difference between an act and an effect?

An act is the exertion of power, as motion is the moving of a body, — its passing from one place to another. Power exerted in action is cause. An effect is a result produced by power acting, i. e. by an act, and, therefore, an effect is and must be a consequence of an act, and not the act itself. There is the same difference between an act and an effect as between a cause and its effect. One is prerequisite in the order of nature to the other.

An act of the will is an exertion of the mind's power of choosing. It is the mind's exerting itself in choosing; of course, such an act cannot be an effect, in the strict sense of the term effect. To suppose it involves absurdity.

An external, muscular action or movement of the body is an effect of an act of the will.

The exertion of creative power, which God alone can put forth, may produce results and effects to any supposable extent which does not involve absurdity. But effects produced by Omnipotence must be just what that power, when exerted, causes those effects to be. That there is no other power in the universe sufficient to resist and counteract the exertion of Omnipotence, needs

no proof. Therefore, effects thus produced can never be the free, voluntary, responsible acts of moral agents, because in all such acts they have *power to the contrary.* To suppose that such acts are produced by omnipotent causation, which in its own nature must be *irresistible*, involves a palpable absurdity.*

26. What results have followed from regarding moral acts as literal effects?

Regarding moral acts as literal *effects* produced directly or indirectly by Almighty efficiency has been a prolific source of error and confusion, in morals and theology.

27. What truth can be inferred from the established fact, that all holiness and sin must consist in acts of living agents having power to perform such acts?

If all holiness and sin are acts, then, since both holiness and sin are *moral*, they are moral *acts.* And if they are moral acts and acts of living agents (see q. 24), then, they are the acts of moral agents, and then, they are acts for which their authors are responsible. (See q. 9.)

28. Why must both holiness and sin be the acts of moral agents?

Both holiness and sin must be the acts of moral agents, because such acts are *absolutely impossible* to all other beings, and because, to suppose that any being should perform such acts, and not be a moral agent, would be an absurdity.

Since all holiness and sin are moral acts and must of course be the acts of moral agents, our next inquiry is,

29. What kind of being is it necessary that a

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* See Appendix, note A.

moral agent should be? (See q. 13, defining a moral agent.)

It is necessary that a moral agent should be a rational, sentient, and voluntary being.

Virtue and its opposite must be the act of a rational mind, in distinction from brutes, which are utterly devoid of the rationality essential to make moral distinctions. To act responsibly, a moral agent must have the possession and use of his reason, in distinction from such infants as know not good from evil, so as to be able to choose the good and refuse the evil, and in distinction from all persons in such a state, as to be incapable of moral distinctions; for instance, persons asleep, somnambulists, idiots, and maniacs bereft of their reason. That no mind in such a state is *capable of virtue or vice*, is an assertion which carries in itself the evidence of its own truth.

30. Why must a moral act be the act of a *rational* mind?

A moral act must be the act of a rational mind, because none but a rational mind can perceive what will promote, hinder, or diminish either happiness or misery. None but a rational mind can understand what will secure, or what will prevent, the highest good and well-being of an individual, or of a moral community. None but such a mind can perceive or understand what moral obligation is, nor what the difference is between moral good and evil. None but a rational mind can approve or disapprove of a moral act. Therefore, none but such a mind can know what virtue or vice is, or *know* how to perform a moral act, or be *able* to perform such acts.

To make the meaning of what we are about to say as definite as possible, it may here be expedient to answer the question,

31. What is meant by motive, in its various modifications, as a mental phenomenon?

Motive is that which *moves*, incites, induces, influences, invites, or leads the mind to act voluntarily. Moral influence, incitement, inducement, impulse to voluntary action of the mind in choosing, is what we mean by motive. (See q. 15.)

32. What is the difference between the subjective and objective motive?

The motive, felt in the consciousness of the mind, is called the internal, *subjective* motive, to distinguish it from the object sought or from the objective motive.

33. What is meant by subjective and objective as applied to motives?

The motive felt in the consciousness of the mind is called the subjective motive, because it is the motive of which the mind is the subject. It is called the internal motive, because it exists only in the mind. It is quite necessary to distinguish this motive from the external and ultimate *objects* of choice, which are called objective motives, because they are the *objects* of desire, of choice and pursuit, and to distinguish them from those internal and subjective motives which are the primary moving springs to voluntary action in all cases. Subjective and objective motives are correlative, and mutually imply each other, so that neither can exist without the other. There can be no desire without an object of that desire, which is actually desired, and *vice versa*. The desire of an object is a subjective motive, and the object desired is the objective motive. Nothing can be an objective motive which does not excite for itself that desire in the mind which constitutes the subjective motive. The mind of man can have no motive in any sense, without having a desire for some object.

The subjective motive is the primary, moving inducement for choosing, — the objective motive is the object chosen when the choice is made. Many objects are desired which are not chosen.

The answer to the last two questions is given here, to aid in understanding the answer to the next question.

34. Why must a moral agent be a *sentient* being?

None but a sentient being is capable of happiness or misery, pleasure or displeasure. Without a sensibility, no being can have the peculiar satisfaction and happiness which attends and follows the approbation of conscience, or the opposite feeling, which attends and follows the disapprobation of conscience.

A being incapable of pleasure or pain can have no motive whatever, neither subjective nor objective, and therefore he can have no power to act voluntarily at all, either virtuously or viciously. Such a being can have neither motive nor power, in the least degree, for any moral or voluntary action whatever.

All possible internal, subjective motive is comprehended and lies in the mind's desire to gain or enjoy happiness and to avoid misery. A mind incapable of happiness can have no desire of happiness, and no idea of happiness, nor of promoting it, nor of any voluntary action, and, therefore, can have no idea of moral obligation, of virtue, or of sin. Such a mind can have no knowledge of duty, and, of course, can have no conscience, and therefore can have no power to fulfil or violate moral obligation. An *insentient* being can have no relation to any obligation, either to obtain or promote happiness, to shun misery himself, or prevent the misery of others.

"A disposition [a susceptibility] to *be influenced* by

right motives is as absolutely necessary to render us moral agents, as a capacity to [*discern* right motives. Since a disposition [or susceptibility] to be influenced by right motives is a *sine qua non* [an indispensable prerequisite] to virtuous actions, an indifferency to right motives must incapacitate us for virtuous actions, or render us in that particular not moral agents."*

Since a being not susceptible of pleasure or pain can have no power to perform moral acts, and since the susceptibility of receiving pleasure from right action and of having a desire to perform it, is absolutely indispensable to the *possibility* of performing right action, for these reasons, the tendency of right action to excite and gratify this desire is an essential element in the foundation of moral obligation. These are the reasons, then, why a virtuous act must be the act of a sentient being, who can gain happiness for himself by performing right acts, and by promoting the happiness of others.

35. Why must all moral acts, both right and wrong, be performed by a *voluntary* being?

All moral acts must be performed by a voluntary being, having the power of will and choice, because this is the power, and the only power, by which an act, good or bad, *can* be immediately performed, or can be possible.

Suppose a being to feel, to the greatest possible extent, the power of motives urging him to seek and promote happiness; suppose him to have a capacity as great as may be for enjoying happiness; suppose him to be possessed of all conceivable knowledge, and to understand all mysteries, and all conceivable ways of

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* Bishop Butler. Quoted from Bib. Sacra; 1857, p. 442.

gaining happiness for himself and of communicating it to others, without the power of choice, he would have no power to act for the promotion of any object whatever, and, therefore, he could not be under obligation to act either for the promotion of his own happiness, or to promote the general well-being, or for any other object.

36. What do the facts stated in the answers to questions 29, 30, 34, and 35, prove?

The facts stated in these four answers prove that all moral acts, whether holy or sinful, are the acts of *rational*, *sentient*, and *voluntary* beings; that the possession and use of the rational, sentient, and voluntary faculties are indispensably necessary to *the power of performing a moral act*; and that no other being can perform a moral act. Because these three powers are essential to the possibility of performing moral acts, they are properly termed moral powers. (Comp. q. 4 and 5.)

37. What powers, then, are requisite to constitute a moral agent, i. e. to qualify a being to act as a moral agent?

Intellect, sensibility, and will. This analysis of the mind is now generally adopted by the most eminent mental philosophers.

CHAPTER III.

CONSTITUTIONAL ENDOWMENTS NEITHER SINFUL NOR HOLY. — MENTAL POWERS AND OPERATIONS CLASSIFIED. — MORAL QUALITY PREDICABLE ONLY OF ACTS OF WILL BY MORAL AGENTS.

38. Does the mere possession of all the moral faculties constitute moral, responsible character, either holy or sinful, previous to any exercise of them in the performance of moral acts?

Suppose a person to be endowed with a rational intellect, a delicate sensibility, and a free will, powers by which he may accurately know his duty, and by which he may feel powerfully pressed by the proper motives to do it, and by which he is made fully able to perform, and to rejoice in performing, his whole duty, — all this, here supposed, is *prerequisite* to the performance of duty or its opposite, of course is entirely distinct from such performance. The power of choice before choosing, and choice subsequently made, are two entirely distinct things. Therefore these powers are prerequisite to the possibility of moral character of any kind, either holy or sinful, and therefore are not moral character itself.

Constitutional endowments are not moral character, for the reason that man is not the creator of his own constitutional powers and endowments. His moral character consists not in the possession of these endowments, but in the voluntary use and exercise of

them. "It is not a man's constitution, but the use he makes of it, that stamps him good or vile." *

With these powers his whole moral character may be either holy or sinful, and that in the highest possible degree; and for the plain reason that his moral character cannot consist in any created or inherited constitutional nature, power, or property of his being, but must be what he himself forms it by his own acts.

39. What is the difference between an intellectual and a mental phenomenon? Mental is a term more general than intellectual. An intellectual phenomenon is some act, exercise, or state of the *intellect.* A mental phenomenon may be either an act, exercise, or state of the intellect, sensibility, or will. Any act, state, or exercise of mind, is *mental.*

40. What is the intellect?

The intellect is the power of thought and knowledge, — the power to think and to know. Reason is an intellectual power. Conscience, in its intellectual function, is the reason applied to approve or disapprove, to justify or condemn, moral acts. Some of the principal terms by which intellectual acts are denoted, are, thoughts, conceptions, ideas, imaginations, perceptions, cognition, knowledge, judgment, remembering, approbation, disapprobation, and reasoning. *All intellectual acts are* THOUGHTS.

41. What is the sensibility?

The sensibility is that power or property by which the mind feels. The different states, exercises, or phenomena of the sensibility, are designated principally by the terms feelings of pleasure and pain, sensations, emotions, desires, affections, and passions. *All exercises of the sensibility are involuntary* FEELINGS. Whenever the

* Minister's Wooing, p. 479.

terms desires and affections are used to express voluntary exercises, they denote phenomena of the will, not of the sensibility. The mind's sensibility or capacity of feeling in view of right and wrong is *conscience* in one of its offices.

42. What is the will?

The will is that power of the mind by which we choose, and by which we perform voluntary internal acts, and not that by which (strictly speaking) we desire.

"The caution of being careful not to be misled by expressions that do not enough keep up the difference between the *will* and several acts of the mind that are quite distinct from it, I think the more necessary; because I find the will often confounded with several of the affections, especially *desire*, and one put for the other; and that by men who would not willingly be thought not to have had distinct notions, and not to have writ very clearly about them." "The will is perfectly distinct from desire." "It is evident that *desiring* and willing are two distinct acts of the mind; and consequently that the *will*, which is the power of volition, is much more distinct from *desire*." — (Locke, Book II. chap. 21, § 30.)

43. What are the principal terms which signify acts of the will?

The principal terms which signify acts of the will are purpose, design, intent, intention, determination, resolution, choice, will, and volition, and the verbs which correspond to these nouns. All acts of the will are voluntary acts, — they are all choices, and they are all volitions. They are those particular acts of the mind which are in its immediate power to perform or avoid, as its intellectual and sentient acts are not.

44. By what three terms are all the mental acts comprehended?

All mental acts are either *thoughts*, *feelings*, or *volitions*.

45. Into how many classes, then, may the mental acts of moral agents be divided?

All the mental acts and exercises of moral agents may be divided into three classes, intellectual, sentient, and voluntary, — acts of the intellect, sensibility, and will, *thoughts*, *feelings*, *and volitions*.

46. Can moral quality, good or bad, be affirmed of mere acts of the intellect?

No moral quality, in the least degree, can be predicated or affirmed of mere intellectual acts, — *mere* thoughts. Whatever is consistent with the most perfect holiness is not sinful. Whatever is consistent with the most perfect wickedness is not virtuous. *Whatever act is necessitated* by an irresistible necessity, is done unavoidably, and cannot therefore be a moral act, neither virtue nor vice. Holiness or sin necessitated is an absurdity, because necessity excludes choice, in which alone moral quality can exist.

Let these statements be borne in mind while the following things are supposed. Suppose that a man has the intuitive conviction, that time or duration never had a beginning, and never will have an end, — that space is infinite, boundless, — that two and two are four, — that a triangle, a square, and a circle, are different figures, — that he knows and approves what is right, he knows and disapproves what is wrong, — that he perceives a great many ideas which have a corresponding reality, and a great many imaginary ideas which have no corresponding reality, — that he has a present perception of his past knowledge of many past

— that he perceives the various objects of sense when they are presented to the organs of sensation, — that he knows, and that he must know, a great many things which he can by no possibility avoid knowing. He knows what duty is, and that he ought to do many things, and that he ought to avoid a great many other things.

If we could know all the above suppositions to be true of a man, it would not show whether his moral character were good or bad. He might be as wicked as the wickedest, and all this be true of him; or he might be as holy as the holiest man in the world, and all this be true of him still.

It is, then, an unavoidable conclusion, — a conclusion demanded by sound reason, that, separated entirely from *all* connection with the consent of the will, mere intellectual pereceptions of either truth, probability, or fiction, have no moral quality, virtuous or vicious.

47. Can moral quality of any kind be predicated of the feelings of the sensibility?

Again, let us suppose that a man feels the pain of the tooth-ache, neuralgia, gout, or rheumatism, or any other kind of pain from any unavoidable cause, accident, or calamity, — that he has all the variety of sensational pleasures which are to be derived from food and clothing, air and health, and all the other good things which the world affords, — that he has at times the pleasant emotions which arise from the approbation, and the unpleasant emotions arising from the disapprobation, which he bestows upon various doings that come under his observation from time to time, — that he desires happiness and to avoid misery, — that he has the delightful emotions which are derived from the exercise of a lively imagination and from the beauties of nature and art, and from sublimity and grandeur; in all this there

is neither holiness nor sin, nothing to evince in any degree his moral character. It is, therefore, an inevitable conclusion, that all the states and exercises of the sensibility, separated entirely from all connection with the consent of the will, have no moral character whatever.

48. What evils have resulted from an erroneous analysis of the mind?

Very few writers on morals have properly distinguished between the phenomena of the sensibility and those of the will, — between the voluntary and involuntary; and this has made it impossible for them accurately to distinguish between moral acts and acts not moral. Within but a short period have any writers, within our knowledge, accurately made this distinction.

One of the most productive sources of error, false systems, false theories, and false doctrines, in morals and theology, has been that analysis of the mind which regards the understanding and will as comprehending all the mental powers. In this analysis the distinction between the acts of the will and the feelings of the sensibility is overlooked, and in this way the feelings of the sensibility are regarded sometimes as holy and sometimes sinful, when in strict sense they are neither, and therefore have no moral character. This error has been one of the greatest obstacles to the progress of sound doctrine in regard to moral obligation, duty, holiness, and sin. This analysis of the mental faculties is now, by the most eminent mental philosophers, generally repudiated.

Bishop Butler and President Edwards are regarded as among the most profound thinkers. In their writings we find the fundamental points of our doctrine

clearly stated and ably maintained. By quoting their statements of these points, we do not say or mean to imply that they do not make other statements inconsistent with these. That they did not keep consistent with their statements of fundamental truth, was in a great degree owing to their confounding the feelings of the sensibility with the action of the will.

Especially is it true of Butler, that in his sermon on love to our neighbor he confounds those feelings of the sensibility which prompt to benevolence with benevolence itself. Notwithstanding their inconsistent statements, we regard Butler and Edwards as among the ablest supporters of the fundamental principles of the doctrine of benevolent utility.

49. What is the sum of the evidence, that neither virtue nor vice can be found in the mere acts of the intellect, nor in the feelings of the sensibility?

(1.) As a general rule, intellectual perceptions are *unavoidable*, and therefore *necessary*, in the circumstances in which they take place. The same is true of the feelings of the sensibility. Our involuntary feelings, desires, sensations, and emotions must be what they are in the circumstances in which they take place.

Many of our intellectual perceptions must be what they are, in all circumstances, if we think at all on certain subjects. We think that no mature person of a sound mind, if he understand the terms, can avoid perceiving that space and duration are infinite, boundless; that two and two are four; that a triangle is not a circle nor a square; that there is a difference between right and wrong; that power to do right is essentially necessary to the existence of moral obligation, and that a moral being ought to do all the good he can. The same may be said of many other perceptions, and

also of many of our feelings. No man can avoid having a desire of happiness and dread of misery.

It is most evident that none of our thoughts or perceptions, sensations, desires, or emotions, are so immediately in our power to have or avoid, as are our acts of willing or choosing.

(2.) Nothing can be said to be *immediately* in our power but the acts of our wills, i. e. willing or choosing. And nothing can properly be said to be *mediately* in our power besides those things which can be produced by the action of our wills. I can move my hand only through the medium of the action of my will.

(3.) If all our thoughts and feelings were immediately in our power, as the actions of our wills are, then we might at any time think and feel directly the opposite of what we do at that time think and feel. And then we might have at any time the opposite thoughts, perceptions, knowledge, and feelings, from those which we really have; and all this without even willing it. If we should have to will our thoughts and feelings to be different, in order to cause them to be different, then our acts of willing would be the medium of causing our thoughts and feelings to be different; and then they would not be *im*mediately in our power, as our choices are when they are made.

(4.) If all our thoughts and knowledge were immediately in our power, as our choices are, we might know that space has limits; that both space and time have had a beginning and will have an end; that two and two are not four; that a triangle has neither three sides nor three angles; that absurdities are realities, and contradictory assertions veritable propositions. If our feelings were immediately in our power, with power to the contrary, as our choices are, then we

could at once, in all circumstances, banish all pain from our minds and take to ourselves the opposite pleasures, changing the most intolerable pangs of remorse into the most satisfactory and delightful emotions, now attainable only by those acts of the will which conscience approves.

50. In what sense may external acts be regarded as having moral character?

External acts in themselves have no moral character.

For example, (1.) Whatever is done by unavoidable accident. Suppose that I shot a man instead of a lion which I intended to shoot, and thus destroyed a life which I intended to save. The external act in itself has no moral character, and in this case it can derive none from the intention, because it was not intended. Suppose, again, that I had intended to shoot the man when the deed was done. The external act would be the same in the two cases. In the first it would have no moral character; in the second it would have none, except that which it would derive from the intention.

(2.) External actions not under our control, as the actions of one having the St. Vitus's dance, the actions of one in any kind of fit, and all spasmodic, involuntary actions. By a spasmodic action which I did not intend, I threw a dollar into a contribution box. All such actions have no moral quality.

Those external actions which are immediately produced by executive volitions, so far as they may be supposed to partake of a moral character, derive it not from the executive volitions by which they are produced, but from the ultimate intention or purpose which they are designed to fulfil. For illustration: I ran to my neighbor's house to extinguish fire, to save

property and life. By executive volitions I took every step and performed every act in the whole process. The moral character of these external acts is to be found, not in themselves, not in the executive volitions by which they were put forth, but, if anywhere, in the generic or general intention which they were designed to fulfil.

51. What, then, is it which may be supposed in some sense to give moral character to external actions, and to imperative or executive volitions?

So far as they have moral character at all, it is given by the *general* intention from which they spring.

52. What points have been proved in the progress of our argument?

We have seen it proved, in the course of our argument, (1.) That neither holiness nor sin can consist in any *necessary or necessitated act or thing*, not in any created substance, nor in the created constitution, nature, powers, or properties of any being, nor in any adaptation or unavoidable tendencies of any created substance, either matter or mind, but, that holiness and sin consist in the moral acts of moral agents.

(2.) We have seen that all the mental acts and exercises are divided into three classes, viz. exercises of the intellect, sensibility, and will, and that no moral quality, of any kind or in any degree, is predicable of any mere act, exercise, or state of either the intellect or sensibility, and that external actions and executive volitions have in themselves no moral quality, and none in any sense, except what they derive from preceding intention.

53. What, then, is the present position of our argument? And does all holiness and does all sin consist in voluntary acts of moral agents?

We have now been led by our argument to the conclusion, that all holiness and sin must consist in the *voluntary acts* of the mind; i. e. in the free intentions, purposes, or choice of moral agents, or nowhere.

54. Is the doctrine, that moral quality can be affirmed only of voluntary action of moral agents, sustained by many of the ablest and wisest of men?

To show the coincidence of doctrines, held by some of the wisest among men, with the conclusion that moral quality is predicable only of the voluntary acts of the mind, we quote from eminent authors the following statements: —

Dr. Reid says: "What is in no degree voluntary, can neither deserve moral approbation nor blame." *

Dr. Chalmers's language is: "The first of these popular, or rather universal decisions . . . is, that nothing is moral or immoral which is not voluntary."

"But the point of the deepest interest is that step of the process, at which the character of right or wrong comes to be applicable. It is not at that point when the appetites or affections of our nature solicit from the will a particular movement; neither is it at that point when either a rational self-love or a sense of duty remonstrates against it. It is not at that point when the consent of the will is pleaded for, on the one side or other, — but all-important to be borne in mind, it is at that point when the consent is given." †

"The moral faculty always aims exclusively at voluntary action." ‡

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* Reid's 5th Essay on Morals; Works, vol. 3, p. 39.

† Bridgewater Treatise, pp. 267, 271.

‡ Sir James Mackintosh on Ethical Philosophy, p. 269.

"That sin or guilt pertains exclusively to voluntary action, is the true principle of orthodoxy." *

"Both sin and holiness consist in voluntary exercises." "Pleasant and painful sensations are common to saints and sinners, and to all sensitive natures, and have no moral quality belonging to them." †

Bishop Butler says: "Acting, conduct, behavior, . . . is itself the natural object of the moral discernment, as speculative truth and falsehood is of speculative reason. [*Intention* of such and such consequences indeed is always included [in action], for it is a part of the action itself." ‡

"As the will is the only active faculty, and the seat of liberty and moral agency, so there is no morality in any other faculty, actions, or impressions, than those of the will." §

"Moral evil is a voluntary act impairing the general good, consisting in the glory of God and the happiness of the created system." ‖

"In fact, the true reason why a person cannot complain of being made answerable for an action, is that he has produced it himself knowingly and willingly. Every thing almost that is said and done in human society, supposes this principle generally received, and everybody acquiesces in it from an inward conviction."

"We must, therefore, lay down as an incontestable principle of the imputability of human actions, that every voluntary action is susceptible of imputation, or

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* Dr. N. W. Taylor's Concio, p. 25.

† Dr. Emmons, vol. 2, pp. 277, 261.

‡ Butler on the Nat. of Vir. added to his Analogy, p. 387.

§ Dr. Edwards's Works, vol. 1, p. 357.

‖ Ibid. p. 138.

to express the same thing in other terms, that every action or omission subject to the direction of man, can be charged to the account of the person in whose power it was to do it or let it alone; and, on the contrary, every action, whose existence or non-existence does not depend on our will cannot be imputed to us." *

"To make use of liberty but in order to choose the best, — this sage direction of the will is properly called virtue, and sometimes goes by the name of reason." †

"Moral agency (without any metaphysical subtilty or refinement) consisteth in *spontaneous, voluntary exertion.*" "Whatever be the cause out of which voluntary exertion ariseth . . . where such an effect is formed, *there* is moral agency; and where it is not, there it is in vain to look for moral quality, . . . either virtue or vice." ‡

"Virtue, by such of the late philosophers as seem to be in chief repute, is placed in public affection or general benevolence. And if the essence of virtue lies [*primarily* in this, then the love of virtue is itself virtuous, no otherwise than as it is implied in, or arises from, this public affection, or extensive benevolence of mind. Because if a man truly loves the public, he necessarily loves love of the public." §

"True virtue most essentially consists in benevolence to being in general. Or, perhaps, to speak more accurately, it is that [*consent*, propensity, and union of heart, to being in general, that is immediately exercised in [*good-will.*"

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* Burlamaqui on Natural Law, p. 22.

† Burlamaqui.

‡ Dr. Stephen West on Moral Agency, pp. 15, 18.

§ Edwards on the Last End, p. 47, sec. 4, chap. 1.

"It is abundantly plain by the Holy Scriptures, and generally allowed, not only by Christian divines, but by the most considerable Deists, that virtue most essentially consists in love." *

"It is a certain beauty or deformity that are *inherent* in that good or evil will, which is the *soul* of virtue and vice (and not the occasion of it), which is their worthiness of esteem or disesteem, praise or dispraise, according to the common sense of mankind." †

"The soul has no other faculty whereby it can, in the most direct and proper sense, consent, yield to, or comply with, any command, but the faculty of the will; and it is by this faculty only, that the soul can directly disobey, or refuse compliance; for the very notions of *consenting*, *yielding*, *accepting*, *complying*, *refusing*, *rejecting*, &c., are, according to the meaning of the terms, nothing but certain acts of the will." ‡

"There are certain powers and properties essential to constitute a being a moral agent, capable of willing in a manner that is morally right or that is morally wrong. Now it is of such an agent in the actual exercises of his will; in the volitions, choices, or preferences, which he actually makes, that I predicate either sin or holiness." §

"Only voluntary actions can be governed by human *reason*, and *those only which regard intelligent beings* are considered in morality; and seeing the object of the will is *good*, [or happiness] . . . it is *evident* that a more general notion of such actions cannot be

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* Ibid. on the Nature of Virtue, chap. 1.

† Edwards on the Will, part 4, sec. 1.

‡ Edwards on the Will, part 3, sec. 4, § 1.

§ Discourse on the Nature of Sin, p. 4, by Prof. Eleazar T. Fitch.

formed, than what falls under the name of benevolence." *

This eminent and learned author, speaking of "Things *morally good*," says, "these are only *voluntary actions conformable to some law*." †

"These acts that are unavoidable by human nature, are not to be punished by human laws. For though nothing be imputed to us as a sin but what hath the concurrence of the will, and is done freely." ‡

"Now that a moral action should belong, or be *imputed* to any man, . . . there can be no other reason or cause, but that the man had power and ability to do it, or not to do it; to perform or omit it." "Every action dirigible by a moral rule, which a man is able to do or not to do, may be imputed to him; and, on the contrary, . . whatever neither in itself, nor in its cause, was in a man's power and disposal, cannot be rightly imputed to him. 'Faults of the mind are voluntary.' On which foundation are built those common maxims, that impossibilities are incapable of obligation." §

An involuntary act, as it hath no claim to merit, so neither can it induce any guilt. The concurrence of the will, when it has its choice either to do or avoid the fact in question, being the only thing that renders human actions either praiseworthy or culpable.‖

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* Bishop Cumberland. Inquiry into the Laws of Nature, chap. 1, § 8.

† Ibid. chap. 5, § 9.

‡ Hugo Grotius, on War and Peace, book ii. chap. 20, § 19.

§ Baron Pufendorff. Law of Nations, book ii. chap. 5, §§ 5, 7, 8.

‖ Sir Wm. Blackstone's Com. book iv. chap. 2, p. 1.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TURNING POINT BETWEEN FATALISM AND FREE AGENCY. — POWER OF CONTRARY CHOICE.

55. WHAT is the turning point between fatalism and free agency?

The turning point between fatalism and free agency (between those who deny and those who hold that there is a foundation for moral obligation in the nature, the powers, and relations of rational beings, and that there is an immutable distinction between right and wrong, holiness and sin) lies in the questions, —

What is that which the human mind universally regards as choice? What is the power of choice? And does choice imply power to make the contrary choice?

56. What, then, is the comparative importance of understanding what choice is?

If we understand correctly what is implied in acts of the will, — what choice and choosing is, then we shall know what that power is by which we choose, and which we call the will. Rightly to understand this is essential, in order philosophically or fully to understand the nature, foundation, and extent of moral obligation, and to distinguish between free, responsible agency and fatalism.

57. What is choice, and what is it to choose?

Choice comprehends all the action of the will. (See q. 43.)

All choice implies that two ways of action by the will are possible, or that two acts of will are at the same time possible; not that the two different acts of choice can both be performed at once, but that both being in the power of the mind, either can be performed and either can be avoided. If only one of two or more ways of action, or only one of two or more acts are possible, and that way or that act is unavoidable by all the power in the agent's possession, then no choice is possible. For example, all rational, voluntary beings do, and inevitably must, seek their own (but not always exclusively their own) happiness in all their voluntary doings. Here, then, only one way is possible. Now, if this be so, then there never is and never can be a choice made between seeking and not seeking one's own happiness. Therefore, all the objects of choice are comprehended in the possible means of happiness to the agent choosing, and the different kinds and measures of his happiness supposed by him to be obtainable by those means. Therefore, again, all choices possible, when made must be between the different means and kinds and degrees of happiness, which the agent seeks to gain for himself. But here it should be observed and carefully remembered, that although in all virtuous action the *agent's* happiness must, from the essential nature of a moral agent, be his *subjective* object, the greatest *general* happiness must be his *objective* object.

Again. If one *certain act* in certain circumstances must be performed, and cannot be avoided by performing any other act in its stead, nor in any way, by any power in the agent's possession, however agreeable that certain act may be to his inclinations and feelings, that act is not a choice. All choice implies, in the being choosing, power to the contrary, i. e. when the choice is

made the agent has the adequate power to make a different and opposite choice from the one which is made.

If this were not so, if men had no power to make choices contrary to those which they do make, they would have no power to *choose* at all — if they had no power of willing otherwise than they do will, then no act of holiness — no duty could be performed which is neglected, and no sin could be avoided which is committed; and for these reasons, both holiness and sin would be impossibilities.

Now, since impossibilities are never performed, and never will be, it would follow that holiness and sin are mere imaginary ideas without any corresponding reality; all which is sufficiently absurd, and contrary to the common sense of mankind.

One thing is certain, either choice implies power to the contrary choice, or moral obligation is nothing but a name.

Precisely this is the turning point between fatalism and free agency, between moral responsibility and infidelity.

Let us, then, carefully consider the question,

58. Does all choice imply motives, and does it imply, in the agent choosing, power to the contrary choice?

It is a settled principle in the science of mind, that all voluntary action, or choice of an intelligent moral being, implies a motive. In order to the possibility of choice there must be in the mind of the agent (not out of it) some felt impulse, some conscious incentive, inducement, or subjective motive, some influence moving the mind to choose, or to make the choice, so that no voluntary action is possible without a subjective motive to choose something, and some thing or object to be chosen.

In further proof that no choice can be made without a motive, let the following points be carefully observed.

(1.) First, then, all voluntary action implies choice.

(2.) All choice implies a motive, by and in consequence of which the mind is moved or induced to make the choice.

(3.) All choice implies at least two objects of choice, between which the choice is, or is to be made. When a choice is made, it implies that some object is chosen, rather than, and in preference to, some other object, which could be chosen, instead of the one which is chosen. Therefore, when one choice is made, two choices are in the mind's power, either of which could be made, but not both at once. To suppose this possible is absurd.

(4.) An object of choice is something which can be chosen, because that which cannot be chosen is by the meaning of terms not an object of choice. As an ultimate object, misery cannot be chosen; and for this reason, it is not an ultimate object of choice.

(5.) Nothing can be chosen, or be an object of choice, which does not excite desire. Misery cannot excite desire for itself; and, therefore, cannot for itself be chosen.

(6.) All objects of choice, whether chosen or not, — all objects between which choice is or can be made, are those, and only those, which do or may excite desire, so that therefore,

(7.) Desire is the only possible internal subjective motive to acts of will, i. e. it comprehends all possible subjective motive, so that there is no possible internal motive not comprehended in desire; and therefore desire is and must be the universal subjective motive to voluntary action, so that no voluntary action is possible,

unless there be some desire prompting to its performance. (Comp. q. 34.) According to Locke, b. ii. ch. 21, "The uneasiness of desire is the spring of action." "If it be asked, what moves *desire?* I answer, happiness, and that alone."

"Nature, I confess, has put into man a desire of happiness and an aversion to misery; these, indeed, are innate practical principles, which do continue constantly to operate, and influence all our actions, without ceasing."—Locke on the Understanding, b. i. ch. 3, § 3.

(8.) Therefore the gratification of the various desires of the mind, and the various means, methods, and causes of gratifying its desires, comprehend all the objects of choice.*

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* To be conformed to the law of right is an object of desire, and it is so by virtue of the fact that this conformity has, in its true and essential nature, an adaptation and tendency to gratify this desire; which gratification is the mind's happiness. To take away this adaptation and tendency from the nature of virtue, therefore, would be to annihilate the possibility of the mind's having a subjective motive for conformity to the law of right. We admit that there is a ground of appeal in the mind to its desire of right, and that this appeal has a tremendous power with a truly rational and enlightened conscience — a power that will carry a man who has it in proper exercise, to the stake, or to face the cannon's mouth. But we claim that the *ultimate* basis of this appeal lies in a desire of the happy result in the mind, which is *ulterior* in the order of nature to its virtuous action, and produced by it.

"It is evident that there can be no idea formed of love [not even the love of right], which does not contain the idea of benefit to him that loves." "To delight in any thing is to feel conscious benefit in it." — (Correspondence of Bishop John Jebb and A. Knox, Esq., vol. 1, p. 325, — an English work.) "The mind always knows more or less that which it desires, . . . desire [being] defined to be the idea of good which a man possesses not, but hopes to possess. Desire is distinguished by this from the blind tendency which urges every being

(9.) The gratification of desire is pleasure, enjoyment, or some degree of *happiness.*

(10.) Therefore the different kinds and degrees and capacities of *happiness*, and the different occasions, means, methods, and causes of happiness, comprehend all the possible objects of desire, of love, of choice, and of voluntary pursuit, and therefore desire of *happiness* comprehends all possible subjective motive for voluntary action, and therefore *happiness* is the *ultimate* object of all possible desire and choice.*

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towards its end, whether it know it or not." — (Walker's Stewart on Moral Philosophy, p. 59.)

But it has been asked, by way of objection, Can the act of a person be virtuous when he *thinks* of his own happiness as the moving cause of his performing the act?

I reply. Can I intend to take my pleasure in doing the will of God, so as actually to be cheerful and happy in it, and not know that I do thus take pleasure, and that I *am* happy? i. e. can I voluntarily take my happiness and not know that I do so? Suppose that I rejoice in God, — that I am consciously moved to promote to the extent of my power the high interests of his kingdom by the fact that I desire to do his will, and that I take pleasure in making his kingdom happy, — now is my virtue vitiated by this fact? In what other way can I be moved to glorify God and enjoy him forever?

"Imagination never yet placed me in a situation not to experience the goodness of God in some way or another. If I do love him, how can it be but because he is good, and to me good?" — (Mary's Letter to Dr. Hopkins, Minister's Wooing, p. 485.) What is love to God but voluntarily taking delight in doing his will, rejoicing that God reigns over his kingdom in love? What is love to God but practically regarding Him, his government, his service, as good to all his creatures, and to me good? "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him." — (Ps. 147: 11.) "We can find happiness in duty, in self-sacrifice, in calm, sincere, and honest friendship." — Minister's Wooing, 479.

* Some have, indeed, undertaken to distinguish between pleasure and happiness, as generically different. But they have done little more than to show that there are different kinds of enjoyment; to

(11.) Every choice has a subjective motive opposed by some other subjective motive, and it has an object opposed by some other object.

(12.) Different objects of choice excite different desires, and opposite objects opposing desires. An actual choice is an election between opposing desires — an election of desires to be gratified, and of the objects to be sought by which they are to be gratified — an election made between the means and methods, the kinds and degrees of gratification or happiness.

When an agent makes a choice, he chooses the gratification of some desire of happiness, by some object or by some means, in preference to the gratification of some other desire of happiness which is, or is supposed

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one kind applying the term pleasure, and to another happiness. There may be a popular use of these terms, to some extent corresponding to this distinction, but it is often not regarded, as when it is said, "At thy right hand there are *pleasures* forevermore."

The term pleasure is used to express all kinds and degrees of enjoyment or happiness, even that of God himself, as, "For thy [*pleasure* they are, and were created." An able writer has said: "We must love brutes on account of and in proportion to their capacity for happiness." So the term happiness is used to signify all kinds of enjoyment and all kinds of pleasure. With propriety we say there is in all pleasure some degree of happiness, meaning some degree of enjoyment. The established use of language is such as to lead those who maintain this distinction to use these terms in violation of their own principle.

It may, however, be admitted, that the term happiness is used to signify the higher kinds and degrees of enjoyment which spring from intellectual and moral action, more commonly than it is to express sensual pleasure.

The task has also been undertaken to prove that desire of happiness, or self-love as a constitutional endowment, does not include all the springs and subjective motives to voluntary action of which the human mind is capable, but, in our judgment, without success.

to be, in his power to gratify by some other means of happiness. Therefore,

(13.) Choice necessarily implies the power of choice by which we choose, and power to choose necessarily implies power to the contrary choice, — power to make a choice contrary to the one which is actually made. This power to make the contrary choice is absolutely essential to free, responsible, moral agents.

This conclusion very evidently corresponds with the universal understanding of mankind. No man of sane mind can act, for any considerable length of time, consistently with the opposite belief. For these reasons, it is evident, man has a free will or power of choice, with the power of contrary choice, and is a moral agent.

That Dr. Edwards held to the power of contrary choice, appears from his own definite and precise statement. He says: "It has been inquired concerning President Edwards's moral inability, whether the man who is the subject of it can remove it? I answer, yes." *

As the two principles — that desire of happiness comprehends all possible subjective motive to voluntary action conceivable, and that happiness is the only possible ultimate object of voluntary action — are fundamental, and as they mutually imply each other, so that if either is true both must be, and therefore a true test of one must be a test of both, they deserve to be very carefully scrutinized, so as to be certain that there is no deception in regard to them, leading the mind astray from the truth.

59. What if it be true, that the desire of happiness

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* Dr. Edwards's Works, vol. 1, p. 309.

comprehends all possible subjective motive, and happiness itself all possible objective, ultimate motive, — what advantage is to be gained from knowing this truth?

If we know it to be true, that *desire* of happiness is the only subjective motive, and happiness the only ultimate object of all possible voluntary action, both right and wrong, then we can perceive that power to gain and promote happiness is the essential, and comprehends the only possible, foundation of the claims of God upon men for their obedience to his laws; and that in this truth we have full ground for making the most powerful appeal conceivable to the sinner's conscience that he should turn from sin to righteousness and obey the gospel, and seek that happiness which alone is the result of holiness, because in this alone he can gain the true end and perfection of his being.

The two facts, *that desire of happiness comprehends all possible subjective motive, and that happiness is the only possible ultimate object* of the voluntary actions of rational beings, are essential to the basis of moral obligation, and constitute the basis in the soul of man for moral obligation, — the place whereon to rest the moral lever by which a sinful world is to be raised from its moral degradation and debasement.

This principle in the nature of moral, responsible beings, is essential to the existence of any and of all *moral* government, even that of the Most High on earth and in heaven. Divest the human mind of this principle, and the Bible would then have no more influence with men than it now has with the brute creation. And then, too, there could be no possible motive for right moral action. Promises and threatenings, rewards and penalties, would then be of no possible avail.

60. How, then, can the principle, that desire of hap-

piness comprehends all possible subjective motive for voluntary action, be tested?

This principle may be tested by a scrutiny carried on in every one's own consciousness, aided by whatever light he can obtain from reading, conversation, and observation by applying it to the two principal objections against it.

Obj. I. That a desire of right is a motive to do right, distinct from a desire of happiness.

Ans. (1.) If desire of right leads to doing right, this doing right will gratify that desire, and this gratification will be some degree of happiness. Most evidently right is a source of happiness, and must be so regarded, or it could not be desired. Therefore nothing, happiness itself alone excepted, can be desired, loved, sought after, or practiced, which is not desired for the sake of *resulting* happiness. It is therefore essential to the possibility of doing right, that it be so adapted to our nature as to excite in us a desire for the happiness which that doing affords.

Ans. (2.) Should it be said that we may desire to do right for the sake of glorifying God, then to glorify God would be to us a source of happiness. To glorify God from a desire to glorify him, and to take pleasure, delight, or happiness in promoting his glory, are one and the same thing. And so of every other voluntary action. Hence it follows, that desire of happiness is the only possible subjective motive for voluntary action, and this of necessity implies that happiness is the general ultimate object of choice.

Obj. II. It is claimed that the "*soul's dignity*" and the "*spirit's worthiness*," and not happiness, is the ultimate object of desire and pursuit in all holy action. According to the theory on which this objection is

founded, the ultimate rule of duty is, "Act worthy of your nature as a rational, immortal being." The object of obedience to this rule is the soul's dignity or worthiness. This object cannot be sought, unless there is in the soul a sensibility moved with a desire for it. Suppose the soul is moved by this desire to obey the rule and gain the object. Gaining the object ends in the gratification of this desire, which gratification is happiness. Thus proving that happiness is and must be the ultimate end aimed at, even when we obey the rule, "Act worthy of the soul's dignity." The *spirit's worthiness*, even in this case, is and must be subservient to the *ulterior* object and end of the soul's happiness. If it were not so, if the spirit's worthiness did not excite in the soul a desire for happiness, nor gratify that desire when the object of the spirit's worthiness is gained, then such an object, for the want of motive, could never be sought; and then the law which should require men to act for such an object would require an impossibility, and therefore be an absurdity. Such is not the law of moral obligation, — such is not the law of God.

Since writing the above, we have met with an objection to our doctrine in this form, —'That all motives that come to the mind find their ultimate ground of appeal in the *desire* of personal happiness, is not admitted, because the desire of right doing is also an ultimate ground of appeal for right doing.'

The esteemed author of this objection admits that, as the ground of this appeal, there must be in the mind a desire of right, or of conforming to the right, as an indispensable motive to right action. Admitting this, our appeal here is directly to the consciousness of every rational mind, that nothing can be an object of desire,

happiness itself alone excepted, which is not, or is not regarded to be, a *source* of happiness to the mind that desires it. We seem to perceive with certainty, from our own consciousness, that the nature of rational mind is and must be such that the attainment of the object of its desires, of absolute necessity, constitutes the gratification of those desires, which gratification is synonymous and identical with the mind's pleasure or happiness, and is, from the nature of the case, ulterior to the right which is the means of it. By these reasons, we are compelled to believe that when the appeal is made to the mind's desire and regard for the right in moral action, the ultimate ground of this appeal is the mind's susceptibility of happiness, and therefore of a *desire for the happiness* which is to be found in right intention, fulfilled in right, subordinate, specific action.

When it is admitted that right action must have the general good and well-being as the ultimate objective end in which that action is to terminate, it seems to us necessarily to follow, that the mind's personal gratification in the accomplishment of that *objective* end, is and must be the ultimate *subjective* end of that right action. Therefore, we think that each of these two points implies the other, and that the question in regard to each or both of these points, is in strict reality but one question. If this be not so, let some abler hand be earnestly and honestly addressed to the task of bringing the real truth out to the light, so the *world* can see it and rejoice in it. *Let us be told intelligibly what obligation requires us to do, and what the ground of that obligation is.*

One thing more. What is a desire of the right, rather than the wrong in moral action, but an involuntary preference of the pleasure known to be inseparably connected with right moral action? "In keeping

them [God's commands] there is great reward." — Ps. 19, 11.

It seems to be a contradiction, that a rational agent should have two ultimate subjective *objects* in the same action, and equally absurd to suppose two ultimate subjective motives for the same action. Suppose that *time* and *light* should establish it as a fact, that the constitutional *desire* of conformity to the law of right, and not a desire of happiness, is the *ultimate* ground of appeal to persuade, induce, or move a person to right action, what result would this have in modifying a system of morals?

From this fact would it not follow, that, so far as one should act from a desire of personal happiness, his action would not be right? And then would it not follow, that entire disregard to our personal happiness would be our sacred, indispensable duty, to the extent of entire self-forgetfulness and self-annihilation? And then would it not appear that instead of being becrazed by a bewildered, enthusiastic imagination, that the woman was going upon a rational and glorious mission who started with a basin of water in one hand and a censer of fire in the other, and on being asked what she was going to do, replied, that with the water she intended to quench the fires of hell, and with the fire she was going to burn up Paradise, to the end that men might practice virtue for its own sake, — from the pure, disinterested love of it?

And then, what could be done with the instructions of Jesus Christ and his Apostles, e. g. "Flee from the wrath to come." "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." "Rejoice not that the devils are subject unto you, but rather that your names are written in heaven." "To them who by patient continuance in

well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality ; eternal life."

If the desire of right is ultimate, and therefore to be regarded as distinct from the desire of happiness, would it not follow that there are two different ultimate objects which moral agents seek, while but one of them is right, and yet the other unavoidably must be sought, while it is still not right to seek it? Then, can there be two such ultimate objects of right human action? Certainly not.

Leaving out of view the impossibility of virtuous action on this principle, we should think that the needful modifications of the system of ethics, which this idea would require, would afford sufficient evidence that it is a mere fanciful imagination, having no corresponding reality in truth.

We are satisfied that if improvements are to be made in theology (and of this we have no doubt), they must be sought in some other direction than the supposition that right, and not happiness, can be the ultimate end of right action, in any sense either subjective or objective.

Another form of objection, somewhat different, may here be briefly noticed.

Suppose the transcendental anti-utilitarian to say, "My desire of my own personal happiness is an affair exclusively my own, and if I choose to sacrifice or neglect that, whose business is it? In that case no one has a right to say aught or in any way to interfere, and therefore my love of happiness can be no ground of moral obligation. So that if my obligation to love my neighbor and promote his happiness ultimately rests nowhere but on my desire of happiness, or on my love to myself, then this obligation has no foundation at all,

and of course it would follow that there is no foundation for *any* moral obligation whatever."

Our reply to this is, that it is a denial of a first truth in morals, viz.: That I am bound to do all the good I can; that I am bound to promote my own personal happiness is a self-evident truth also, of which this argument is a denial. If I am not thus bound, no reason can be given why I should be bound to love my neighbor. If I am not bound to love myself, I cannot be bound to love my neighbor at all, because if I am not bound to, and do not, love myself, then to love my neighbor only as myself would be to love him not at all.

But I *am* bound to love myself and to promote my own happiness, because my happiness is a good and valuable object, and to me valuable and good. If I am not bound to promote those good and valuable objects which are in my power, I am not under obligation to do any thing. My neighbor's good is worth no more for being *his* instead of mine. And therefore if I am under no obligation to promote my own good, I cannot be bound to promote another's good. Again; if my neighbor's good is not, and is not esteemed, as a good to me, I cannot seek it. To do this would be an impossibility, and therefore I could not be under obligation to do it.

Now let me ask my anti-utilitarian transcendental brother, What, according to your theory, is the foundation of obligation? He replies, A sense of right, or a desire that right should be done, which is the same thing. I say, Very well. Now you are on the right track, because by doing right in the promotion of happiness, your desire, that right should be done, will obtain its gratification, which is your happiness. And no man

can do right without first having a desire to do it, and of course a desire for the gratification arising from right doing; so, then, desire of happiness is the ultimate ground of obligation to promote happiness, which comprehends all duty.

We should suppose that the following, from Dr. Edwards, must be conclusive with every mind that is able and willing duly to appreciate his statements: —

"To choose any thing without motive, is really a contradiction; it is to choose it and not to choose it at the same time. Whatever is chosen, is chosen as being agreeable in some respect or other; and whatever is agreeable, is agreeable either in itself immediately, or on account of its [relation to, or] connection [or comparison] with, something else and subserviency to it, which something is immediately [*agreeable* in itself. Now, whatever is agreeable on account of its connection with something else [and is for that reason chosen], is chosen on account of that something else, as the motive. Whatever is agreeable to a man [and is for that reason chosen], is chosen from the motive of his appetite, taste, or bias, which is included in President Edwards's sense of motive. And whatever is not agreeable to a man on one or other of these accounts is not agreeable to him at all, and therefore is not chosen."

If this be so, of which there can be no reasonable doubt, then it follows that the different kinds and degrees of happiness, and the different means of happiness, comprehend all conceivable objects of choice and love. But to continue our quotation, —

"To choose an object without motive, is to choose it without end or design, either of immediate or remote gratification of any principle in him who makes the

choice. And whether this be possible or conceivable, I wish every candid person to judge."

An act of choice without a motive, as defined by President Edwards, is an event without a cause. For [except the agent's power of action], every cause of volition is included in President Edwards's definition of motive. "By motive," says he, "I mean the whole of that which *moves*, excites, or invites the mind to volition, whether it be one thing singly, or many things conjunctly." *

61. What now is the position of our argument, and is moral quality according to it predicable only of voluntary acts of the mind, or acts of the will?

Having shown in the Appendix (for the benefit of such as are able, and choose to make thorough work in mastering this subject), the invalidity of the most important objections, in addition to those noticed in the body of the work, we are left in possession of the doctrine, that man has a free will and the power of choice between moral opposites. Since removing objections is not necessary to the completeness of a sound argument, they who can trust in the argument given and do not choose to puzzle their minds with objections, can let them take care of themselves, and proceed directly with the argument. And, now, since by a former conclusion (see q. 50), if holiness and sin exist, as without dispute they do, they must be found in acts of the will, we are now brought to the conclusion, that so far as man is responsible, both holiness and sin are found only in acts of the human will, and therefore, moral quality is predicable only of the acts of the will.†

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* Dr. Edwards's Works, vol. 1, p. 372.

† See Appendix, note B, for answer to objections.

62. On what ground have we affirmed that holiness and sin can exist only in acts of will?

(1.) We have affirmed that holiness and sin can exist only in acts of will, and can be affirmed only of moral agents in the actual exercise of their powers, on the ground that voluntary exercises are, and nothing else is, immediately in the controlling power of voluntary beings. Whatever else is in their power to perform or avoid must be accomplished through the medium of the action of the will.

(2.) That men are moral agents, that holiness and sin are in their power to perform or avoid, is a truth sustained by the consciousness of the race, and carries its own evidence in itself. It must be assented to by every rational mind, as soon as it is fairly and fully understood. Nothing more evident can be said to prove or disprove it. And yet let it be remembered, other things equally evident may be said by way of illustration and explanation, — to remove objections and thus to *confirm* this truth.

(3.) Since holiness and sin are somewhere and can be found nowhere else, they must be found in the voluntary acts of rational beings, — in the nature and tendencies of their moral choices.

To recapitulate,

63. What are the main points already established?

In the preceding inquiry we have established,

(1.) That neither virtue nor vice can exist in any thing or act *necessitated* by an invincible necessity to be what it is; nor in any *created* substance, object, or thing; nor in the *created* constitution, nature, or powers; nor in the *created* properties; nor in any adaptation or unavoidable tendencies of any created substance, either matter or mind.

(2.) That neither virtue nor vice can exist in any *unoriginated* truth, or any unoriginated object of thought whatever.

(3.) That moral quality cannot be predicated of *mere* thought, mere intellectual perceptions, or conceptions or knowledge of any kind, separated from all connection with the will.

(4.) That no *mere* feelings, involuntary desires, emotions or exercises of the sensibility of any kind, are virtuous or vicious in any degree.

(5.) That virtue and vice, holiness and sin, are found alone in the free, unnecessitated intentions, purposes, or choices of rational moral agents, in distinction from every thing else.

CHAPTER V.

OBJECTS OF CHOICE. — DIFFERENT KINDS OF GOOD. — DESIRE OF HAPPINESS.

64. WHAT is the next topic of investigation?

Having shown that all holiness and sin must consist in the voluntary acts or choices of the mind, we proceed, next, to consider the objects between which all moral choices must be made, and to define that object which must constitute the ultimate end of all choice and of all voluntary action, and thus to confirm and illustrate the position, already taken in Chapter IV., that the *desire* of happiness is the generic motive, which comprehends all *primary* motive of voluntary and moral action, and that happiness is the *ultimate* end and object of all desire and of all choice and voluntary pursuit.

This leads us, in the next place, to the consideration of good. Good in the concrete is the thing that is good; the quality of any thing which constitutes or renders it good, is goodness in the abstract; goodness is the name of the quality or state of being good. Good in the concrete and goodness in the abstract are so nearly alike that we sometimes use the terms interchangeably.

That we may be the better able to distinguish moral goodness, after which we are looking, from all other kinds of goodness, we proceed to inquire, —

65. What is good in the most *comprehensive* sense of the term?

(1.) *All* good consists either in some agreeable feeling, of which sentient beings are conscious, in some happy state, condition, or exercise of the sensibilities of sentient beings, or in some thing, being, or cause so suited to their sensibilities, as to be productive of some happy state, condition, exercise, or feeling of those sensibilities. In short, all good consists in happiness, and the means of happiness.

(2.) Good is that which is or *can* be desired. Every thing or being which is, or can be, the object of desire or love, is in some sense good. That which cannot be desired nor loved is not good. Good is a very general term. Goodness, as a quality, is predicable of every desirable, valuable, or useful thing. And goodness is the only quality which constitutes the true value and desirableness of every thing or being which is truly valuable, desirable, or lovely. Goodness comprehends all that is valuable in every good thing.

(3.) Nothing is desirable, valuable, useful, or amiable, which is not in itself an ultimate good, or good as the means of procuring something that is an ultimate

good, — a good in itself aside from, and independent of, all its relations.

(4.) The happiness of an agent is to him a good in itself when considered as separated from, and irrespective of, all its relations. When we say that happiness, or any degree of pleasure, independent and irrespective of all its relations, is in and of itself a good to him who has it, we mean that it is so, when viewed entirely in and by itself, having no regard whatever to any of its causes or consequences, or to any of its relations to any other thing.

But, according to established usage, any thing besides happiness is a good in itself, when, by being what it is in itself, it is a source of present, immediate happiness to any being. Any thing besides happiness is a good in itself to any being to whom it is immediately a source of happiness, instead of being the means or cause of some other thing, which is, or may be, a source of happiness.

We have seen (q. 58) that any gratification of desire is some degree of pleasure or happiness. Nothing but pleasure or some degree of happiness is, or can be, gratification of desire. The proof of this is to be found in every one's own consciousness. That which procures or produces this gratification is the means of his happiness.

(5.) As nothing but happiness, or the means of it, can *gratify* desire, nothing but happiness or that which, in the mind's view, *tends* to some degree of happiness, or relief from pain, can *excite* desire.

In order that any desire should ever be felt in the mind, some pleasurable emotion must first be experienced to excite desire. And this is so, because desire consists in some appetite or craving for the continuance

or repetition of some kind of pleasure which, or the like of which, the mind has already experienced, in its own consciousness, and of which it has thus formed an idea and learned the value.

Surely, it is self-evident that a person can never desire pain or suffering for itself. He may, it is true, voluntarily endure it for the sake of some ulterior benefit or good, but never for the sake of the *pain merely.* If he chooses to endure it, it must be for some desired gratification, of which he has formed a conception and some degree of hope. Relief from pain may be an object of desire, and when obtained will afford some degree of gratification or happiness. Let it be understood that the desire to be relieved from and to avoid pain is generically the same thing as the desire of happiness. It is but a self-evident proposition, that we can have no desire in regard to an object, while to that object we are indifferent. We can neither desire to gain nor avoid it. We can neither hope for nor fear that towards which we are indifferent. As fear implies the real or supposed danger of some evil which is *dreaded,* so hope implies that something *desired* is in some degree expected. We desire to gain and enjoy that which we hope for; we desire to avoid that which we dread and fear. All this is so, because indifference is the name which we give to that state of mind towards all those things about which we have no desire whatever.

To say that we can have, concerning that to which we are indifferent, any desire whatever, either to promote or prevent, to enjoy or avoid, to gain or shun, would be to assert a simple contradiction.

It is merely absurd to suppose that we can have for

any person, object, or cause, a *disinterested* regard, in the sense of an *un*interested regard.

(6.) If one's pleasure or his happiness in some degree *is*, and if nothing else is or can be either the ultimate exciting *cause* or the *gratification* of his desire, then some form of that individual's happiness cannot but be the ultimate *subjective* object of all desire possible to him, and of all possible choice and voluntary pursuit, and of all voluntary and involuntary love; and therefore *his* happiness and the means of it must constitute all that which is or can be to him good.

(7.) From this truth, thus established, it follows, that since universal happiness consists in the aggregate happiness of individuals, therefore, the happiness of all individual beings, together with the means of that happiness, constitutes and includes all possible good, — includes all general and universal good; and therefore all the possible objects of choice.

The terms satisfaction, gratification, pleasure, enjoyment, and happiness, it is important to notice, are designed and adapted to express substantially the same sense, meaning, or idea.

66. Does the evidence that happiness and the means of happiness constitute the sum of all good amount to a demonstration?

(1.) If happiness is the only primary exciting cause of desire, then it must be the only ultimate object of that desire, of which it is the only possible ultimate gratification; and then happiness is the only possible ultimate object of choice and pursuit, and of course the only ultimate good.

(2.) Again: if happiness is the only ultimate good, then desire of happiness is the only possible subjective motive of all acts of will. These two facts, that hap-

piness is the only ultimate good, and that desire of happiness is the only subjective motive, reciprocally imply each other, and they are *fundamental* facts.

(3.) We have seen (q. 65, § 2) that all good is desirable. 'All actual choice is to be happy.' In the language of Dr. Emmons: "The ultimate end of all labor is . . . enjoyment." Butler says,—

"That which makes the question concerning a future life to be of so great importance to us is our capacity of happiness and misery. And that which makes the consideration of it to be of so great importance to us is the supposition of our happiness and misery *hereafter* depending on our actions *here*. Without this, indeed, curiosity could not but sometimes bring a subject, in which we may be so highly interested, to our thoughts; especially upon the mortality of others, or the near prospect of our own. But reasonable men would not take any farther thought about hereafter, than what should happen thus occasionally to rise in their minds, if we were certain that our future interest no way depended upon our present behavior; whereas, on the contrary, if there be ground, either from analogy or any thing else, to think it does, then there is reason also for the most active thought and solicitude to secure that interest, to behave so as that we may escape that misery and obtain that happiness in another life, which we not only suppose ourselves capable of, but which we apprehend is also put in our own power." *

"In short, every man in every thing he does, naturally acts upon the forethought and apprehension of avoiding evil and obtaining good; and if the natural course of things be the appointment of God, and our

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* Bishop Butler's Analogy, pt. 1, chap. 2.

natural faculties of knowledge and experience are given us by Him, then the good and bad consequences which follow our actions are his appointment, and our foresight of those consequences is a warning given us by him how we are to act." *

> "If there's a power above us
> (And that there is, all nature cries aloud
> Through all her works), He must [*delight* in virtue;
> And that which He delights in must be happy." †

i. e. must be a source of happiness to those who practice it.

Nothing can be either desired or loved or sought besides happiness, and the means of happiness. And for these reasons, as we have before proved, happiness is the only *ultimate* good; and, therefore, *happiness* and *the means of happiness include and constitute all good*, — all objects of choice which are possible to be conceived of. What that good is or can be, which is neither happiness, nor so suited to the sensibilities of sentient beings as to be either immediately or ultimately productive of happiness, we cannot conceive, and we have found no one who is able to tell.

To disprove this conclusion, two things are essential; and without accomplishing both, to disprove it is impossible.

The first is to find some thing, — some object or being that is good and desirable, and that in fact excites desire and so is desired, and which in reality is neither happiness nor in any sense the source or cause of happiness.

And the second is to prove, that happiness is not the

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* Bishop Butler's Analogy, pt. 1, chap. 2.

† Cato's Soliloquy; Shakspeare.

only ultimate and absolute good. We are conscious of a full assurance that neither of these two things can ever be done; to suppose it, involves absurdity.

In confirmation of this conclusion, we adduce the following from Essays on Lord Shaftesbury's Characteristics, by John Brown, London edition, 1751.

"Having at length gained an adequate idea of virtue, and found that it is no other than the voluntary production of the greatest public happiness, we may safely proceed to consider the [subjective] motives by which mankind may be induced to practice it." — p. 168.

"To love my friend is to feel a pleasure in doing him good. And conversely, to feel a pleasure in doing good to my friend is to love him." — p. 164.

"There is no other [subjective] principle of human action, but that of *immediate* or foreseen happiness of the agent." — p. 166. "For as we have seen, the *sense* or prospect of happiness is the only possible [subjective] motive to action." — p. 219. "So that it will now appear that the [subjective] motives of man to the practice of virtue, can only arise from a sense of his *present*, or a prospect of his future, happiness." — p. 167. The sense of these extracts seems to be this: Virtue consists in gratifying our desires for happiness by promoting the greatest public good.

67. What is the difference between the production and promotion of happiness?

We may produce happiness without promoting it, but we cannot promote without producing it. That which produces some happiness but more misery, promotes misery. The same means which produces some pain or suffering, but more happiness, promotes happiness; i. e. increases the comparative sum on the whole, and thus secures an increase of good.

68. Why is it important to mark this distinction?

Sin produces some pleasure, or a degree of happiness, but more misery, and therefore promotes, and is, the *voluntary* promotion of misery, although the promotion of misery may not be *directly* designed.

Holiness sometimes produces some suffering and pain, but always more happiness, and is both the designed and actual production and promotion of happiness.

69. What is meant by highest happiness?

Ans. Highest happiness may mean the greatest enjoyment of which an individual is susceptible, or of which the universe is susceptible. Sometimes, in this discussion, we mean the greatest comparative sum total in the agent's power, and sometimes the greatest sum, the promotion of which is possible to all moral agents united. This different use of terms should be carefully observed and remembered.

70. What is absolute good?

Absolute good is a good complete, — not unlimited, but entire in itself; i. e. wholly independent of any relation to any thing else.

71. What is ultimate good?

Ultimate good is that to which all other good is subservient, and for which alone all other good is sought which is sought. The ultimate good is that for which all other good is desired, loved, chosen, or pursued. Ultimate good is that which is *last* in the order of time and of pursuit.

72. Are absolute and ultimate good one and the same thing?

As an absolute good is that which is good independently of any relation, and an ultimate good is the only good which is good independently of any relation to

any ulterior good, therefore absolute and ultimate good are identical.

73. Why is happiness the only *absolute* good?

(1.) Happiness is the only absolute good, because it is the only object which can be *desired*, independently of all its relations. And,

(2.) Because it is the only thing which is *good*, independent of all its relations. Happiness is the only absolute good, because it is the only good complete in itself, irrespective of all its relations to any other and every other object. To be free from misery and to enjoy happiness is a good in itself, irrespective of all its possible relations, causes, or consequences. And nothing else is. Right can be desired, but not as independent of its relations. Independent of its relations, ends, and aims, or results aimed at, it is not a good; it is nothing.

74. Why is happiness the only *ultimate* good?

Happiness alone is the ultimate object of all possible desire, of all love, choice, and voluntary pursuit. On this point Mr. Locke says: "If it be asked what moves desire? I answer happiness, and that alone." Nothing else can be ultimate gratification of desire but enjoyment, pleasure, or some degree of happiness; and, for these reasons, happiness is the only possible ultimate good conceivable. Hence, it appears that happiness constitutes all absolute and ultimate good, as absolute and ultimate good are identical.

All other good things, then, besides happiness, are good only on account of their having some relation to happiness. All the relations of other good things to happiness which constitute the goodness of those things consist in designed or undesigned *conduciveness* to happiness, or in the designed or undesigned *means* of hap-

piness. All other good, therefore, besides happiness, must have the relation to happiness of being conducive to it, whether this good be the source, means, occasion, ground, capacity, support, cause, or reason of happiness, or a sentient being capable of happiness.

The fact that happiness is the only absolute and ultimate good, necessarily implies that all other good is good and valuable only on account of its relation to happiness; and this, again, implies that happiness and the means of happiness constitute the sum of all good, and of all possible objects of choice.

A person can regard nothing as good to him which is neither immediately pleasant nor ultimately pleasant to him in any of its consequences.

"By *happiness*, we are to understand the internal satisfaction of the mind arising from the possession of good, and by good, whatever is suitable or agreeable to man for his preservation, perfection, conveniency, or pleasure. The idea of good determines that of evil, which, in its most general signification, implies whatever is opposite to the preservation, perfection, conveniency, or pleasure of man." *

75. What is *relative* good?

Relative good is that which is good on account of its relation to some good ulterior to itself; it is that which relates to and is productive of some ulterior good.

76. Why is all good besides happiness relative good?

All other good besides happiness is good and valuable only on account of its *relation* to happiness, and therefore all other good is *relative* good. Whatever is good and valuable, because it is so suited to the sensibilities of rational beings as to be productive of their

* Burlamaqui, p. 9.

happiness, is to them a relative good. Whatever is good or valuable as the means of happiness, is relative good. Whatever is either immediately pleasant and agreeable on account of what it is in itself, or agreeable in its ultimate consequences, and which can be distinguished from happiness, is good; and its goodness, in either or both of these respects, so far forth as it can be distinguished from happiness, consists in its being, by design or without design, a source or cause of happiness.

Since happiness is the only possible ultimate object of pursuit, — ultimate in the sense of final or last, in point of time and in the order of desire, choice, and pursuit, — all other possible good is and must be good, by having to happiness the relation of conduciveness to it. This subserviency to happiness must be either intended or *un*intended. The indispensable necessity of this relation of all other good to happiness arises from the nature of the human mind, — from the nature which is essential to a moral being.

The aim of a rational being to promote the greatest sum of general happiness in his power has the compound relation of purposing to promote, and of tending to promote, and of actually promoting, that happiness, and in this way it is the means of promoting it, and by having this compound relation to happiness it is a relative good. *All good is included in absolute and relative good.*

77. Is holiness, then, *relative* good?

(1.) Holiness is the aim to promote greatest happiness, and is so suited to the sensibilities of rational, moral beings as to be both *productive* and *promotive* of personal, individual, and the general good and happiness; and, where holiness is perfect, it is conducive of

the general happiness in the highest possible degree, and is thus in its own intrinsic nature relative good.

(2.) Holiness is the designed promotion of the happiness both of its subjects and of its objects; of those who exercise it, and of those towards whom it is exercised. And because *it is* what it is thus seen to be, it is, both *immediately*, *in and by itself*, and in its natural and essential tendencies and consequences, *pleasing* to God and all holy beings.

The primary cause of one's approval of or complacency in holiness is, that it is an intent to promote, and therefore tends to promote, happiness. If its intent and tendency were, what they are not and cannot be, namely, to promote misery, it would be unamiable — it would not be an object of approval or complacency. Hence it follows, that the just measure of our complacent regard to holiness is our best possible appreciation of its intent and tendency to promote happiness. The intent and tendency of holy action to promote happiness is the reason why it is, in and of itself, immediately pleasing, agreeable, and comely in the sight of God and all holy beings. Now, for these reasons, or because holiness is what it is in and of itself, it is a relative good, in distinction from ultimate good, and in distinction from what is, in strict sense, the only *absolute* good.

(3.) Again; that holiness, aside from its being so suited to *our* sensibilities as to be agreeable, cannot be to *us* a good, and therefore cannot by us be desired, would seem to be a self-evident proposition.

All possible conception of goodness, as the quality of an act, must imply the adaptation of that act to the sensibilities of some being to which that act is a good, and such an adaptation as is productive of his happiness.

If, as it has been well said, "all virtues terminate in a regard for the general happiness in some of its forms," then that happiness is so adapted to our sensibilities as to excite a desire to promote it.

If this were not so, if the general *happiness* were not so suited to our sensibilities as to excite in us any desire to promote that happiness, we could have no motive to promote it, and then we could have no motive to be holy, and having no motive for holiness, it would be an impossibility. Now, from this and from what is said under q. 58 (7), and from what is manifest in itself, if holiness could not be desired nor practiced, then, for these reasons, it could not exist, and it would be good for nothing if it could.

Thus it appears that the supposition that productiveness of happiness is not an element essential to the nature of holiness, — that holiness is not suited to the sensibilities of moral beings, if it were true or acted upon as true, would, by the necessary laws of mental action, make holiness an impossibility. Therefore, the separation of holiness from all its relations and tendencies to happiness would be its inevitable annihilation.

That, in the view of Pres. Edwards, nothing can be an ultimate end which is distinct from, and does not involve, happiness, is evident from the following statements of his. "Let what will be God's last end, *that* he must have a real and proper pleasure in." "And if he has a real pleasure in attaining his end, then the attainment of it belongs to his happiness."* And here, again, we arrive at the conclusion, that holiness is and must be in its essential nature, relative good.

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* Last End, chap. 1, § 4.

CHAPTER VI.

HAPPINESS NOT THE ONLY GOOD. — VIRTUE TENDS TO HAPPINESS.

78. IN the further investigation of our subject, on what ground shall we proceed?

We are now to proceed, in this investigation, on the four grounds already established, viz.: (1.) That *happiness* is the only ultimate end for which all other good is or can be desired or loved or sought or practiced, and is therefore the only *ultimate* good conceivable. (2.) That happiness is the only good complete, in and of itself, irrespective of all its relations to any thing and every thing else; that it is therefore the only absolute good. (3.) That desire of happiness comprehends all possible subjective motive for voluntary action. (4.) That *holiness*, by its essential and necessary relations to happiness, is constituted *relative* good, these relations being a design and tendency to promote it.

79. Is happiness, therefore, the only good?

Happiness is not the only good. Happiness cannot exist without a cause or source from which it is derived, therefore the causes and sources of happiness are good, whether they are or are not of a moral, voluntary nature, whether they consist of holiness or of mere natural causes.

It may be well here to observe, that in a chain of reasoning, wisdom requires, that, as we proceed to sup-

ply one link after another, we should be vigilant to see that no link is left out. So that while we stop to inquire after the meaning of terms, we should not forget the last link of the chain which has been supplied, but carefully notice if it is properly connected with the next link in the chain.

80. What is the meaning of the term natural, as used in this discussion?

We have occasion to use the word natural, in two very different senses.

(1.) Natural is that which belongs to nature. The natural properties, qualities, or tendencies of any thing, are those which belong to the nature of that thing. The same object may have different natures. A man may have a moral nature and a physical nature, the nature of a moral agent and the nature of an animal. To him may appertain the nature of mind and of matter. His moral nature requires holy action. His physical and material nature requires food, bodily exercise, etc. An act may have a moral nature, and an accidental goodness which is not moral. Those elements of an act, which constitute it right or wrong, belong to its moral nature. The goodness of a moral act, which is not moral goodness, does not belong to its moral nature.

Moral acts and various other objects have a goodness which is not moral goodness. Moral acts sometimes produce undesigned accidental happiness. This is not moral goodness. The goodness of a horse, an ox, of the sun, light, air, food, clothing, etc., is not moral, but natural goodness. This brings us to the second meaning of the term.

(2.) Natural sometimes means *not moral*. In this sense all objects of thought, which are not moral, are natural

objects. The goodness of a moral act, which does constitute its moral quality or character, is termed its natural goodness to distinguish it from the moral goodness of that act. *Natural and moral objects comprehend all objects.*

When we use the term natural in the sense of belonging to the nature of an object, the meaning will be qualified by the kind of nature which we have in view; e. g. whether it be the moral nature of that object, or its nature which is not moral, and whether it be the nature of mind or matter.

81. What is *natural* good?

(1.) Happiness is natural good, in contradistinction from moral goodness. It has no moral character or moral quality whatever, and in its highest degree, it is but the result, the effect, and consequent of moral character.

(2.) All means of happiness which are undesignedly or unexpectedly means of happiness are so far natural good. Any production of happiness, besides the virtuous, designed production of happiness, is natural goodness. All relative goodness not included in moral goodness is natural goodness. All unforeseen, unexpected, and unintended production of happiness, although it results from voluntary action, and even from right moral action, so far as it is unintended, is not moral, but natural goodness. All production of happiness without possible foresight or expectation of the result, according to the common course of nature, is natural goodness. All the goodness of all these things is *mere* natural goodness.

(3.) Supremely selfish men may perform many useful acts, — they may exercise all the *natural* affections, and do all that natural affection will prompt them to do;

they may be kind to their friends and neighbors; they may give to the poor; they may be good mechanics, farmers, physicians, and lawyers; they may sing well, and play well on instruments; and by their voluntary doings in many ways, they may produce great good. By *mere* humanity and *mere* philanthropy, — by a mere regard to the temporal wants and interests of mankind, which falls below universal benevolence, such men, while they are supremely selfish, may produce a great amount of happiness. But in all this there is no moral goodness, because there is no aim in it all, — no impartial design to promote the highest general good. All this goodness is but natural goodness. The goodness of all those actions, which spring from no higher principle, is mere natural goodness.

(4.) Happiness, and the natural means of happiness, constitute all natural good.

While there is no disposition nor intention to promote the highest general good known to be in their power, while they have no regard to God or his authority, they are acting from the lower instead of the higher motive, — from a motive too low and partial to constitute their doings morally good or holy.

For a controlling principle of action, natural affection is not only defective, but, without a higher principle to control, it would lead a parent to rebel against God because he takes away a beloved child by death.

So the mere philanthropist, who loves man more than he loves God, would, if he had the power, break open the prison of the universe, and rescue those condemned to death from their doom. No moral principle would prevent him.

"If any being or beings have by natural instinct, or any other means, a determination of mind to benev-

olence, extending only to some particular persons or private system, however large that system may be, or however great a number of individuals it may contain, so long as it contains an infinitely small part of universal existence, and so bears no proportion to this great and universal system, — such limited private benevolence, not arising from nor being subordinate to benevolence to being in general, cannot have the nature of true virtue. . . . It is evident to a demonstration, those affections cannot be of the nature of true virtue from these two things.

"*First*, That they do not arise from a principle of virtue.

"*Secondly*, These private affections, if they do not arise from general benevolence, and they are not connected with it in its first existence, have no tendency to produce it." *

This prepares the way to inquire,

82. What is *moral* goodness?

(1.) Moral goodness is the voluntary, designed goodness of holy action. Moral goodness includes all the goodness of holy action which can be properly and truly distinguished from the accidental or mere natural goodness of such action. All the accidental tendencies, which could not be foreseen, of holy action, to produce happiness, may be termed the *natural* goodness to distinguish it from the *moral* goodness of that action. The proper, the known, the designed tendencies of holy action, those tendencies, which, according to the dictates of natural reason and conscience, belong to holy action, to promote happiness, are moral goodness.

(2.) The goodness of duty done, all the moral

* Pres. Edwards' Nature of Virtue, ch. 6.

goodness and moral value of holy action, lies ultimately in its being the voluntary, intended promotion of happiness; or in the designed adaptation and tendency of that action to promote the greatest happiness, as its ultimate object. And therefore all moral goodness is relative goodness, — relative in distinction from ultimate and absolute good.

83. What is the difference between the moral and the incidental goodness of a right act?

(1.) The moral goodness of a right act consists in the known and designed nature and in the proper tendencies of that act, — in its voluntary and intended adaptation to the promotion of the greatest happiness in the agent's power.

(2.) The difference between the two kinds of goodness is, that *moral* goodness has this nature, these tendencies, and this adaptation to promote the greatest good by design, while the incidental goodness of a right act consists only in undesigned or accidental tendencies to happiness, which could not be foreseen or in any degree expected, and, therefore, do not belong to the moral nature of that act.

So far as a holy act produces unintended happiness, which could not be expected, this may be termed its accidental or natural, in distinction from moral goodness. Such accidental tendencies constitute no element of its moral goodness.

(3.) There may be a natural goodness of a sinful act, consisting either in its selfish, partial, voluntary production of inferior happiness, or of the lower, instead of the higher good, or in its involuntary, unintended production of happiness, or in both united. So far as a sinful act produces happiness, it may be regarded as having a natural goodness in distinction from a holy

goodness, whether that goodness be intended or unintended.

84. What is the difference between moral goodness in the concrete and in the abstract?

Moral goodness in the concrete consists in right moral acts. In the abstract it is that quality of right acts which constitutes them right.

Or right in the abstract may be regarded as the principle or law of right, and then right, as the quality of an act, consists in those qualities of the act which constitute its conformity, fitness, or adaptation to the law.

Here let it be carefully observed and remembered, that moral goodness as constituting moral character, can exist only in the concrete, and never in the abstract.

85. Why have some supposed that tendency to promote happiness does not belong to the moral nature of virtue?

Some of the principal reasons, which have led some to suppose that tendency to promote happiness does not belong, as an essential element, to the moral nature of virtue, may be comprised in the following facts.

(1.) Right moral acts do in many cases fail to accomplish their desired and supposed results, because the agents have aimed at results not within their power to accomplish; e. g. a person endeavoring to train his child to walk in the right way, or to persuade a sinner to forsake his sins.

(2.) Right moral acts sometimes have accidental tendencies, which *depend* on the moral character of those acts, but do not constitute the moral character of those acts, and, of course, do not belong to their moral nature.

A man may be overheard in prayer or in holy conversation, and be the unexpected means of good to the hearer.

Virtuous efforts are wisely made in a thousand ways to save life and property, and to accomplish various objects which prove to be impracticable, to neglect which would be most evidently sinful.

We may make strenuous efforts to save men from death by drowning, by fire or sickness or other causes, and fail of success for the want of power. In such cases that we have done our best, is a source of pleasure and self-approbation, which if we had not done would have been a source of self-condemnation and remorse.

(3.) Right acts are sometimes the occasion of undesigned results, which do *not* depend upon their moral character, and are not the proper results of the character of those acts; e. g. a wicked man may sing the songs of Zion and turn some to righteousness, with no better design than to fill his pockets with money, to be spent in debauchery, without being aware that any are even likely to be morally benefited by his singing.

(4.) A forgetfulness or not considering that tendency to promote or secure an object belongs to the intrinsic, essential nature of an intelligent choice to promote that object, when it is in the agent's power.

These are some of the most prominent and probable reasons which we can assign why some philosophers have been led to believe and defend the doctrine, that the *inseparable* and designed tendencies of virtue to promote happiness do not belong to its moral nature, — that holy action is a good in and of itself quite independent and irrespective of its tendencies and consequences or effects. That this doctrine cannot be true is evident from the fact, that the moral character of a

design must depend upon the objects and consequences which that design is intended to promote.

The facts above noticed, which may have led to the belief that the tendency of virtue to promote happiness does not belong to its nature, so far from establishing this doctrine, appear, when carefully considered, to be consistent with the opposite doctrine, that the inseparable tendencies of virtue to promote happiness belong to its nature so essentially, that, if virtue were devoid of those tendencies, it would be an impossibility.

The fact that a person fails to accomplish what he had intended because he aimed at what proved to be an impossibility, is not inconsistent with the truth, that any act, known or supposed to have no tendency, in any of its relations, to produce happiness, would be an impossibility.

Because right moral acts often have unintended, unexpected, accidental tendencies, which do not, for that reason, belong to their moral nature, affords no evidence that the *inseparable*, *purposed*, *and essential* tendencies of virtue to promote happiness do not belong to its moral nature, nor that tendency to promote an object does not belong to the intrinsic, essential nature of an intelligent intention to promote that object, when the author of the intention has the promotion of that object in his power.

86. What would obviate a large proportion of the objections to the doctrine of benevolent utility?

(1.) A correct understanding of the doctrine.

If the doctrine of virtuous utility were properly apprehended, this of itself would obviate a large proportion of the objections raised against it. Much of the opposition is directed against false views of it, rather

than against the true doctrine itself, and thus many minds are confused by false issues.

(2.) Much that has been said and written has been directed, and *well* directed against the infidel notion that *mere*, unintelligent, undesigned utility, — mere, unintended, useful tendency is virtuous. Much of this has been done apparently under the impression that the arguments were forcible against the doctrine of benevolent utility, while against this doctrine they had no application, and therefore no weight at all. The propriety of these statements may appear as we proceed in the development of the doctrine.

N. B. — Natural goodness and moral goodness comprehend all possible goodness conceivable.

So also, as will by and by appear, absolute and relative goodness embrace all goodness.

So also, as it has already been shown, happiness and the means of happiness include all possible good conceivable.

CHAPTER VII.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF GOOD CLASSED. — THEIR COMPARATIVE VALUE. — THE SUPREME GOOD.

87. How many kinds of natural good are there?

There are are two kinds of natural good. (1.) Happiness, or the only absolute and ultimate good; (2.) All the means of happiness not included in holiness or virtuous goodness. All natural good consists in absolute good, and that one kind of relative good which is not holy.

88. How many kinds of relative goodness are there?

All relative goodness consists of two kinds. (1.) Moral goodness. (2.) All natural goodness except happiness; or thus,

(1.) The holy and designed means of happiness; (2.) All other means of happiness, or the natural in distinction from the holy and designed means of happiness. The second kind of relative goodness includes whatever of natural, in distinction from moral, goodness appertains to moral acts, right or wrong, and all other means of happiness found in nature; e. g. good animals, good land, good climate, air, light, health, food, clothing, buildings, skill, knowledge, mental and bodily powers, and all other good things which the world affords. These are all relative good. And their goodness consists alone in being the means of happiness.

89. How many kinds of absolute and ultimate good are there?

Happiness includes all absolute and ultimate good.

90. How many kinds of moral goodness are there?

Holiness includes all moral goodness.

91. What is absolute and natural evil?

Misery, suffering, pain, is both absolute and natural evil. Absolute and natural evil is the opposite of absolute and natural good. As there are natural, in distinction from holy means of happiness, so there are natural, in distinction from moral means of suffering. The natural means of suffering include all the means of suffering but those which are of a moral nature.

92. What is moral evil?

Sin, the opposite of holiness, is moral evil. Sin, in some important respects, but not in all, bears very much the same relation to misery that holiness does to happi-

ness, and is therefore relative evil, as well as moral evil.

93. What reason can be given for calling moral goodness moral excellence?

(1.) Moral goodness may be called moral excellence, because it excels all other means of happiness.

(2.) Because the happiness, of which it is the indispensable means, excels all other happiness. It procures a higher, greater, and more excellent and valuable happiness and well-being than can be procured by any other and all other means of happiness combined. The excellence of holiness is its excellence over all other means of happiness. Moral goodness is the most excellent means of the most excellent happiness, and therefore is moral excellence.

94. *Obj. I.* But, says the objector, is it not derogatory to the sacred character of holiness to regard it as means to an end, as mere relative goodness?

(1.) Since moral obligation is itself a relation of moral beings to their moral acts, and, through their moral acts, a relation to the happiness and misery which are in their power to promote or prevent, and since the obligation which rational beings are under to promote happiness and prevent misery comprehends all the obligation there is or can be in the universe, the fulfilment of this obligation comprehends all the holiness that there is or can be, and, therefore, all possible holiness is and must be a goodness which has an indispensable relation to happiness, and is thus constituted in its essential nature relative goodness, — the best means of the best happiness.

(2.) Since holiness is not happiness, but entirely a distinct thing, — since holiness is an act of the will, and happiness is an exercise or state of the sensibility, and

since nothing is good but happiness and the means of happiness, — to maintain that it is not essential to the nature of holiness to be the means of happiness, or, which is the same thing, that holiness is not a relative good, is to degrade it to the level of that which is worthless, good for nothing; than which (however well meant it may be) there is no greater absurdity. It is, therefore, very manifestly true, that holiness is not and cannot be an absolute good; that it cannot be a good in and of itself, aside from its being, by and in the tendencies and adaptation of its own nature, both productive and promotive of happiness. Therefore, to regard holiness as a relative good is not derogatory to its true nature.

(3.) Holiness is, and must be, productive of happiness, or its nature must be changed. This, in the nature of things, is as impossible by any conceivable power, as that space should be annihilated. It must, therefore, be a most manifest truth, that holiness is and must remain (by the designed adaptation and the known tendencies of its nature to produce happiness) suited to the sensibilities of a rational mind, with such an adaptation to produce happiness as is superior to any and all other conceivable means of happiness, and that it is suited to produce a happiness that is more excellent and valuable, in kind and degree, than any and all other happiness that can be conceived of.

(4.) "Nothing can be of greater moment than that *subservience* to Christian feeling [the happy feelings of Christians] which belongs to the nature of holiness; for holiness is the joy of heaven." It is the main source, the grand pillar and support, of all true blessedness, that ever was or ever will be throughout the universe. It is the source of infinite delight even to God

himself. President Edwards has said: "According to Scripture, communicating good to the creature is what is in itself pleasing to God. And this is . . . what God is inclined to on its own account, and what he delights in simply and ultimately." — Last End, chap. 2, § 5. This communicating good, this promotion of happiness, is holiness. It is what *God* regards as a good in itself, because it is the communication of good, and is to *him* a source of pleasure. To maintain this, is not derogatory to the sacred character of holiness, but placing it in its true light as a relative good.

(5.) If holiness were not in any degree a source or means of happiness and well-being, then there would be as much well-being in the universe, and the kingdom of God would be as well off without holiness as with it; and then holiness would be of no value, and it could be neither desired, loved, sought, nor practiced. On the contrary, as the truth now is, all the real value of holiness lies in its aiming to be, and in its actually being, productive of happiness. If holiness were banished from the universe, nothing desirable would remain, but desolation and misery would everywhere abound. Therefore, instead of being derogatory to its sacred character, the doctrine that universal, perfect, and perpetual holiness would secure the greatest amount of universal, constant, and everlasting bliss, is in the highest possible degree honorable to the true nature of holiness, and ascribes to it the highest conceivable value.

95. *Obj. II.* Again, the objector inquires, is not holiness a nobler and higher good than happiness?

The comparison instituted in this question seems not to be founded in the strictest propriety, because, if by nobler and higher, he meant more honorable, more

worthy of moral esteem, approbation, praise, or reward, then we say, there is nothing in happiness in its own peculiar nature, which is worthy of *moral* esteem, approbation, or praise in the least degree. In this regard, the claims of holiness and happiness will bear no comparison whatever. Voluntary, benevolent action, and that alone, is morally excellent, noble, honorable, or praiseworthy. Happiness, therefore, in a moral point of view, cannot be compared with holiness, nor be said to be either a higher or lower, a more noble or less noble good, because it is not moral goodness at all.

If one kind of happiness is ever in any sense properly regarded as more noble, honorable, or praiseworthy than any other, it must be solely on account of the means by which it is obtained. That happiness which is derived from benevolence, by the principle of association, may be imagined to partake of the character of the source from which it is derived. In this way it may be esteemed as a nobler and higher happiness than that derived from any other source. But, strictly speaking, the nobler, the more honorable and praiseworthy quality belongs, not to the happiness, but to the benevolence by which it is obtained. Happiness derived from one source may be higher and more excellent in kind and degree than that derived from another source, but, since happiness has no moral goodness whatever, the excellence of one kind of happiness over another (in the strict sense) is not moral excellence.

96. On what does the value of any thing and every thing, besides happiness, depend?

The logical value of every thing which is not happiness depends upon its being, in the true and proper adaptation and tendency of its nature, the means of happiness, and upon the amount of happiness of which

it may be the means. The value of the means of happiness can be estimated by comparing the value of those means with the value of the happiness to be obtained by them.

The value of means to an end depends upon the value of the end or object to be obtained by those means. The value of the means of happiness depends upon the value of the happiness produced by them, or which may be produced by them.

97. In what way, then, can the comparative value of holiness and happiness be estimated?

The value of holiness is to be estimated in the same way in which the value of the necessary means of any object is to be estimated.

Suppose I have in my possession a medicine which is the indispensable and certain means of preserving my life. That medicine is of equal value to me with that of my life. 'In such a case the subordinate end may be as much valued as the last end, because the last end . . . does altogether depend upon, and is wholly and certainly conveyed by it.' — Pres. Edwards.

Although there is no propriety in attempting to compare the moral goodness of right moral action with the moral goodness of happiness, when happiness has no moral quality, yet it may be proper to consider the question, —

98. What is the comparative, logical value of holiness and happiness as different kinds of good?

In answering this question, it should be borne in mind that holiness is moral goodness, and that happiness is natural good and not morally good in the least degree. It should be remembered also, that their comparative value is not to be estimated by the moral qualities of each, because happiness has no moral quality.

Their comparative value depends upon their inseparable connection and unchangeable relation to each other.

The relation of holiness to happiness is that of means to their ends, of designs to their objects, of causes to their effects, and the relation of highest happiness to holiness is that of ends to their means, and of effects to their causes.

Ans. 1. Since the highest and most excellent happiness and well-being of the universe, so far as it exists, depends upon holiness as its necessary means, without which it could not be, and since the perfect and perpetual holiness of the intelligent universe would produce and secure the highest possible amount of happiness and well-being, and since the value of holiness depends upon the value of that happiness, which it produces and is designedly adapted to produce, the greatest possible amount of universal holiness would be of equal value to the greatest possible amount of universal happiness, and therefore, *vice versa*, the value of highest happiness is equal to the value of highest holiness. The value of one can be neither more nor less than the value of the other.

Ans. 2. The logical value of moral goodness, notwithstanding it is relative good, is equal to the value of that happiness of which it is the indispensable means, notwithstanding happiness is the only absolute good. Therefore the highest possible holiness, of all intelligent beings in the universe, is equal in value to the highest possible happiness of the whole universe.

99. In what sense can the highest amount of holiness be said to be the highest good?

We have seen that there are two kinds of good,

which include all possible good, viz. relative and absolute.

Holiness is relative goodness, and the highest kind of relative goodness. As there are various kinds of relative goodness, holiness is the highest goodness of its kind. Highest holiness is the highest relative goodness. In addition to this, —

Holiness can be said to be the highest good only in the sense that it is the necessary, the most excellent and exalted means of the highest conceivable happiness, and that highest holiness comprehends all possible moral goodness and moral perfection.

100. In what sense is highest happiness the highest good?

Happiness exists in various kinds and degrees. Highest happiness is a higher good than any lower or less degree of happiness. That happiness which is highest in kind and degree is the highest good, when compared with any happiness of a lower kind or degree. Highest happiness in kind and degree is the highest good in the sense that it is a higher good than any other good with which it can be contrasted, or to which it is opposed. It cannot with propriety, as a good, be contrasted with highest holiness, because it is not opposed to it. Highest holiness and highest happiness are necessarily and inseparably connected. So that neither can be sacrificed for the other. The sacrifice of either would be the sacrifice of both.

Highest happiness is the highest kind and degree of absolute good.

Happiness is the highest good in the sense that the value of all other good depends upon its being, in some of its relations, the designed or undesigned production of some kind or degree of happiness. All other good

derives its value from this its essential relation to happiness, viz. of being either its designed or undesigned means of some kind or degree of happiness. Whatever, besides happiness, has none of these relations to happiness, has no goodness in it. No other good is higher than the highest happiness in any sense or degree in which the two kinds of good can with propriety be compared or contrasted.

Perfect holiness is highest *relative* good. And highest happiness is highest *absolute* good. When we say that holiness is not an absolute good, we never mean that it is not unqualifiedly and positively a good, and an indispensable good.

Happiness is a good in one sense superior to all other good, because all other good is constituted good by being in some of its relations subservient to happiness, and because, therefore, that happiness is the only absolute and ultimate good.

Since happiness cannot exist without a cause, to annihilate the *relations* of *subserviency* which holiness and all other good things sustain in various ways to happiness, would be to annihilate *all* good at once and forever. Until this is done, all other good besides happiness must be relative good, and happiness must be the only absolute and ultimate good. Therefore,

To destroy this essential relation of holiness to happiness would be the eternal annihilation of both.

101. Into how many kinds may all good be divided, taking another method of classification?

All good is included in, and may be divided into,

I. Happiness;

II. Two kinds of the means of happiness. 1. The virtuous means of happiness; 2. All the means of happiness which are not virtuous.

Those means of happiness which are not virtuous may be subdivided,

(1.) Into those which are; and, (2.) Those which are not the sinful means of happiness.

Again: All good is included in,

I. Absolute good; and,

II. Relative good.

Relative good is divided into two kinds.

(1.) Holiness.

(2.) All the natural means of happiness; i. e. all other means of happiness not included in holy action, nor in the sinful means of what in common language are called sinful pleasures.

There is a natural, in distinction from moral goodness, in the natural affections, the kindness, humanity, patriotism, and philanthropy of the supremely selfish.

Again: All good is included in,

I. Natural good, or happiness and the natural means of happiness.

II. And in moral good, or holy action.

102. What, then, may we now conclude is the supreme good, that which the ancients called the Summum Bonum?

The supreme, the highest possible good, the *summum bonum*, consists neither in holiness nor happiness separated from their immutable relations to each other, but in the greatest possible sum of both holiness and happiness, united in their proper, inseparable, and unchangeable relations to each other. This must be so, because one of these cannot exist without the other. The highest happiness cannot be obtained without the highest holiness, which never can fail to produce it. We cannot, in fact, separate the happiness which is produced by holiness, from the holiness which produces

it. Nor the holiness from the happiness which it produces. Although they may be in thought distinguished, they are in their own nature necessarily and inseparably connected, so that the more holiness the more happiness, and therefore the greatest sum of both is the highest or the supreme good.

103. Since happiness is the only absolute and ultimate good, why may not holiness be "bartered"* or sacrificed for any, not even the highest degree of happiness?

Holiness must not be "bartered" nor sacrificed for any thing nor for every thing else. It must not be "bartered" for happiness of any kind or degree, because this cannot be done without sacrificing both the highest happiness and the highest holiness, — without, in short, sacrificing the supreme good.

104. Why may not the most valuable happiness, in kind and degree, be given up for the promotion of the highest possible degree of holiness?

Because the greatest happiness cannot be given up without sacrificing both the highest degree of holiness and the most valuable happiness in kind and degree, which would be sacrificing the supreme good. Since the highest possible sum total of holiness and the highest possible amount of happiness are necessarily and inseparably connected in their own nature, neither can be given up without sacrificing both. It is therefore plain *why* holiness "cannot be sacrificed for any thing else without unavoidable debasement and contempt," — why "other things [except highest happiness] may all be sold for it, but this cannot be bought for any thing

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* See Hickok's Moral Science, p. 49, and its review, in the Presbyterian Quarterly Review, 1855, Dec. No., p. 436.

lower," — why "the man who would barter *it* for happiness of any kind has already lost it." And it is, therefore, also equally plain *why* the highest happiness which can be produced by holiness, may not be wisely lost nor given up for any possible equivalent. Neither highest holiness nor highest happiness can be sacrificed for any thing else without losing both, and therefore holiness is not 'the *only* good which may not be lost for any possible equivalent.'

CHAPTER VIII.

RIGHT AND WRONG ACTS DISTINGUISHED. — OBLIGATION, ITS NATURE, FOUNDATION, AND EXTENT. — MAN'S NATURAL AND NECESSARY RELATION TO HIS OWN HAPPINESS. — SELF-LOVE, SELFISHNESS, AND BENEVOLENCE DISTINGUISHED. — MAN'S MORAL RELATIONS TO HIS OWN AND TO THE PUBLIC HAPPINESS.

105. WHAT principle has thus far presided over our investigations, and what principle will now need to be had more fully in requisition?

By a careful examination in review of our progress thus far, it may be seen that the one controlling principle, which has hitherto presided in the main over these investigations, is, that moral obligation, wherever it exists, can be fulfilled, — that the holiness required of a moral agent, is that which he can perform, and sin that which he can avoid. Or, what ought to be done can be done, and what ought to be avoided can be avoided.

In answering our next question, and in future, we

shall need more fully to put in requisition our second fundamental principle, — that *all the good* which can be done ought to be done.

Since according to what has before been proved (q. 62), all holiness and sin consist in the free voluntary acts or choices of moral agents, the next question is,

106. What are holy in distinction from sinful acts?

Since all moral acts binding upon moral agents must lie within the limits of the possibility of being done and of being avoided, so that the agent can do or avoid doing the acts required or forbidden, since all the good which can be done ought to be done, and since happiness is the only possible ultimate good, those acts of the mind which are by design adapted to promote the highest happiness which we can promote, and, because they are thus adapted, are right, holy, just, and good. Those acts, in which we *aim* with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength to promote all the happiness we can, are adapted to its promotion, and are, therefore, right. The supreme and predominant choice, therefore, which we ought to make, is to *promote* all the happiness which we *can promote*. And to this choice all our other specific choices ought to be made subservient, and then they will be right and good in distinction from being sinful.*

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* When the supreme, predominant purpose of a person is to promote happiness to the extent of his ability, he has the virtuous character of a good man. And the degree of his goodness depends upon the strength, predominance, permanence, and stability of this general purpose, tested by the extent to which he resists temptation, and to which he endeavors, with success, to make his specific acts subservient to his supreme object. In short, the degree of one's goodness consists in the energy with which he makes the particular acts of his life subservient to this supreme object. The promotion of the

All choices which in their nature and tendency are known to be opposed to and to hinder the promotion of the highest happiness in our power, are wrong and sinful, and therefore ought to be and can be avoided.

107. What, then, is the true nature of moral obligation?

From what has been proved, it follows that moral obligation in its true nature is a relation, and a most important relation, between moral agents, and that happiness and misery of sentient beings, which are or may be supposed to be, in their power to promote or prevent. And that relation is, that they ought to promote as much happiness and prevent as much misery

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highest good being the object of his supreme purpose, constitutes his character good. His moral character consists in this purpose, and from it his particular acts derive their character, so far as they are subservient to it or dictated by it.

It is all-important to be considered and remembered, that no acts are virtuous any farther than they spring from a benevolent spirit, are dictated by, or are by design subservient to, the purpose which has for its supreme object the highest general good. So that without a generic principle or purpose of benevolence, i. e. while a person is and continues to be of a supremely selfish spirit and purpose, it would be a contradiction to suppose any act of his could spring from or be dictated by a benevolent choice; and therefore no act, performed by the supremely selfish, can have the virtuous quality, or be a morally right and holy act. To remember this is needful, in order to understand the intended meaning of the following discussion, as well as on account of its being essential truth.

When we say moral quality is predicable only of choice or of acts of the will, let us not be understood as confining moral quality to specific volitions, nor to the action of the will in making choices or forming purposes; but as including in acts of the will, not only subordinate volitions, but the predominant, supreme purpose, and not only the act of the will in forming this purpose, but that exercise or state of the will maintaining and carrying it into execution.

as they have power to do. *Moral obligation, then, in its true nature, is that which imperatively requires moral beings to promote as much happiness, and to prevent as much misery, as they can.*

"Every exercise of our faculties, that tends of itself to the perfection and happiness of man, meets with the approbation of reason, which condemns whatever leads to a contrary end." *

108. What is implied in promoting the greatest amount of happiness in our *power?*

(1.) In promoting the most valuable sum of happiness in our power, it is implied that we should do all we can for the highest amount of the general weal, welfare, or happiness; i. e. for the happiness of all who are known, or may be supposed to be within the reach of our influence. This is doing all the good we can; this is doing all we can to please and glorify God, and to honor him in all his authority; this is doing all we can to make our neighbors, our friends and enemies, all men and the whole universe of beings, happy. To do this would be to fulfil all our moral obligations, and would therefore be that holiness which the law of God of us requires.

(2.) Promoting all the happiness we can, will lead to and imply promoting all the holiness in our power, because holiness is the necessary means of highest happiness.

109. What, therefore, is the foundation and extent of moral obligation, — the extent of our obligation being understood in the sense of *how much* is required by it?

(1.) Since moral obligation, in its true nature, is that

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* Burlamaqui, p. 44.

which imperatively requires and obligates us to promote the greatest amount of well-being or happiness in our power, — since happiness is the only ultimate good which it is possible for moral beings to promote, — since we ought to do all the good we can, — it follows inevitably, that the rational *power wisely to promote happiness* is the foundation, in a moral being, of the moral obligation which binds him to do *all the good* in his power.

(2.) Herein it appears, that since a moral agent's power to promote happiness is the basis, it must also be the measure of his obligation, because the obligation does and must extend just as far, and no farther, than there is foundation and support for it, — just as far as he has power to promote happiness, and thus to fulfil that obligation to promote it; for, where this power is, moral obligation is, and where it is not, obligation is not and cannot be, because there is no foundation nor support for it.

(3.) In the language of Professor Haven, "The foundation of accountability and obligation is freedom. Take this away, and you strike a fatal blow at man's moral nature. It is no longer possible for me to feel under obligation to do what I have no power to do, or to believe myself accountable for doing what I could not possibly avoid." — Mental Philosophy, p. 543.

Neither the ox nor the horse, neither the lion nor the tiger, has power, self-directed, intelligently to fulfil obligation. If they had the power of intelligent moral agents to promote happiness, they would then be under the same obligation to do good which binds rational beings. A dog, led by instinct, has some power to do some things which promote happiness; but he has no power intelligently and rationally to aim at the result-

ing, ultimate happiness. He has no power intelligently to perceive, and therefore no power to fulfil, moral obligation.

(4.) Since power intelligently to promote happiness is the foundation of obligation, that obligation is founded in the nature of moral beings, and in the nature of their relations to each other and to each other's happiness, and in their relations to whatever there is in the things which exist, or in the *nature* of things which can be used as the means of promoting the happiness of any and all sentient beings. Therefore, the *extent* of our obligation (it being measured by our power) is to *promote* as much happiness as we can. Such are the nature, powers, and relations of men to each other, to other sentient beings and to God, that they have the ability and opportunity to obtain happiness for themselves by promoting the general good, — by pleasing God; and therefore, on these grounds, they are under obligation to promote the most valuable happiness, both for themselves and for the public in general, to the greatest extent in their power. Therefore, the intelligent, rational power to gain and promote happiness in the kingdom of God is the basis which our heavenly Father has laid in the soul of man, on which he lays our obligations to virtue and holiness. Or thus, — the basis of obligation which God has laid in the soul of man is his power to obtain and promote happiness.

Here it is incumbent carefully to consider,

110. What is implied in this power to promote happiness, which is the foundation of moral obligation?

(1.) Power to promote happiness implies the requisite knowledge, or the power of knowing what acts and choices are properly adapted in their nature and ten-

dency, according to the common course in the nature of things, to promote or to prevent happiness.

(2.) It implies, also, the *opportunity* to exert itself in the promotion of happiness, or in doing good. It is only in an *abstract* sense, that I could be said to have power to lift an old-fashioned fifty-six, while there is none within the possibility of my reach.

(3.) It also implies the capacity of taking pleasure in doing right, — in promoting the general happiness and well-being. If neither doing good, promoting happiness, nor the general happiness itself, is so suited to the sensibility of any being as to excite his desire to promote that good and happiness, then he has no power to promote, and therefore can be under no obligation to promote it.

Therefore, again, that holy action should be so suited to the sensibility of a moral being as to excite his desire for happiness, so that in that desire he may have the motive for holy action which is essential to the possibility and to the power of performing that action, is one element in the foundation of moral obligation. (Compare qs. 4–7, 10, 12–14, 30, 34–36, 144.)

(4.) "A disposition [or susceptibility] to be influenced by right motives is as absolutely necessary to render us moral agents, as a capacity to discern right motives is. Since a disposition [or capacity] to be influenced by right motives is a *sine qua non* [an indispensable prerequisite] to virtuous actions, an indifferency to right motives must incapacitate us for virtuous actions, or render us in that particular not moral agents." *

Again: Power to promote happiness implies all that

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* Bishop Butler, quoted from Bib. Sacra, 1857, p. 442.

is essential to the possibility of moral action, or to constitute a moral agent, to wit, intellect to know what duty requires, susceptibility to the influence of motives for right action, and the power of will to choose in accordance with the prompting of those motives to right and holy choice. It also implies all the ground of obligation that exists in the intrinsic value of the absolute good which constitutes the end of holy choice, or the virtuous elective preference. This ultimate end of holy action includes the objective object, viz. the highest general good, and the subjective object, viz. the highest happiness of the agent.

The power to promote happiness, as being the ground of obligation, implies and includes the two facts: first, the relation of the object to the agent, of having a tendency to beget and to gratify his desire for his personal happiness; and second, the fact that our aim, to promote the object which duty requires, has a natural tendency to secure that object.

Now, all this implies that moral obligation is founded in the nature and relations of moral beings to each other, and to the happiness of all sentient beings, and in their relations to whatever there is in the nature of things which can be made the means of promoting the highest general happiness; and that there is in the nature of moral beings a capacity for the perception and sense of right and obligation, connected with and based upon their desire of happiness, to which a powerful appeal may be made in favor of right action.*

111. What, now, must we conclude that holiness is, and sin its opposite?

In the above manner we reach the following conclusions: —

* See Appendix, Note C.

(1.) That holiness in the concrete (that is, as it takes place, and as alone it can take place, in moral character and action), consists in the voluntary, designed fulfilment of known obligation, — in voluntary obedience to known law, which law consists in the unoriginated, eternal principle and law of right and of righteous doing.

(2.) That all choice, which is known to be by design adapted in its tendencies and nature, to prevent misery and to promote the general welfare and happiness, is holy action, — is holiness, and comprehends all holiness in every form in which holiness can take place, or in which it can be exercised.

(3.) That sin, the opposite of holiness, is voluntary violation of known obligation, — it is voluntary disobedience of, and a refusal to obey, the eternal and known law of right. All choice, which is known by its author to be adapted in its nature and tendency to hinder the general welfare and to oppose the highest general good, is sin.

Sin is a refusal to obey the law, which requires the promotion of highest happiness, and is therefore the voluntary prevention of happiness and promotion of misery.

112. Have these conclusions concerning the nature of holiness and sin, — the nature, foundation, and extent of moral obligation, been demonstrated?

If the four following principles are each and all of them eternally and unchangeably true, (1.) What ought to be done can be done. (2.) All the good which can be done ought to be done. (3.) Happiness is the only possible, absolute, and ultimate good. (4.) The desire of happiness includes all possible, subjective motive, then, to promote happiness, comprehends all the pos-

sible good which can be done, — if these four principles are eternal truths (as we hold that they most certainly are), our conclusions, above stated, concerning the nature of holiness and sin, the nature, foundation, and extent of moral obligation, result from them with demonstrative certainty.

If it can be shown that any action which ought to be done cannot be done, by the agent who ought to do it, and at the time in which he ought to do it, then our argument and doctrine are annihilated; then we can have *no idea* of what obligation, duty, or holiness is.

113. What must be the only way, if any, in which the above conclusions are to be refuted?

If the above conclusions as to the nature of obligation, holiness, and sin, are to be refuted, it must be done either by showing that something which ought to be done cannot be done, or that we are not under obligation to do as much good as we can, or that happiness is not the only *ultimate* good, — the last in point of time and order of pursuit and acquisition, or that there is some subjective motive which is not included in the desire of happiness.

The arguments on which we rely for the proof that moral obligation, holiness, and sin are what we have described them to be, are based on the utter impossibility of their being any thing else essentially different. The impossibility of its being otherwise is the general idea which may be found lying at the bottom of the arguments on which we mainly rely for the support of our teaching and doctrine. Therefore, to suppose holiness to be substantially different from what we have represented it to be would make it an impossibility.

114. What, then, is the *natural* relation which men sustain to their own happiness, and is every man under

the natural, unavoidable necessity of seeking his own happiness in all he does?

"Every man, in every thing he does, naturally acts upon the forethought and apprehension of avoiding evil or obtaining good." — Butler's Analogy, p. 103.

"Every being that has understanding and will, necessarily loves happiness . . . [and] must, of necessity, have an inclination to happiness." — Edwards on the Nature of Virtue, chap. 8.

"To choose an object without a motive is to choose it without any end or design, either of immediate or remote [*gratification* of any principle in him who makes the choice. And whether this be possible or conceivable, I wish every candid person to judge." — Dr. Edwards, vol. i. p. 272.

"Now let man reflect but never so little on himself, he will perceive that every thing he does is with a view to happiness, and that this is the ultimate end he proposes in all his actions, or the last term to which he reduces them. This is a first truth, of which we have a continual conviction from our internal sense." "Such is the instinct that attaches us to life, and the desire of happiness the *primum mobile* [primary motive] of all our actions." — J. J. Burlamaqui, Counsellor of State and Professor of Law at Geneva, on Natural Law, p. 29. (See q. 58, § 7.)

Our constitution as rational, sentient, voluntary beings is such, that by the irresistible necessity of nature, we must seek, — it is utterly impossible for us to avoid seeking, our own happiness in *all* our voluntary doings, right or wrong. That we should do this is a matter, not of choice, but of a natural necessity. In the language of President Edwards, "love of happiness is neces-

sary." Therefore, it is not inconsistent with duty to seek our happiness in all we do.

Since every man is under the inevitable necessity of seeking his own happiness in all his voluntary, moral action, there must be a right course as well as a wrong one, in which his happiness can be sought; and since *selfishness* and *benevolence* comprehend all the ways in which this can be done, i. e. I must either regard and seek my own personal happiness as the supreme good, which is selfishness; or I must regard the *general* happiness as the supreme good and seek my personal happiness in promoting it, which is benevolence. No third way is possible or supposable; then one of these modes must be right and the other wrong.

The only possible supreme choice which we can make in regard to our seeking happiness, is to choose in which of these two methods, — whether in benevolence or selfishness, in the right or wrong, we will seek it; in other words, to choose from what sources we will seek to derive our happiness, and on what objects we will place our supreme affections. So, then, the natural relation of men to their own happiness is, that they are under a natural necessity of deriving and seeking it in all they voluntarily do. (Comp. q. 14, § 4.)

115. In which of these two methods, then, are all moral beings under the obligation of duty to seek happiness for themselves?

In order that we may answer this question with the highest degree of certainty possible, it is needful to ascertain accurately what supreme selfishness and true benevolence are, as distinguished from each other, and what self-love is, as distinguished from both. (See q. 120.)

The preliminary question to be considered is,

116. What is self-love?

Every rational, sentient being is the subject of a constitutional self-love, — an involuntary desire or love of happiness, which is an essential, inseparable element of his being. Every man by the necessity of his nature is the subject of this kind of self-love, but he may or may not have a selfish love of self, which *is not* consistent with benevolence, and he may or may not have a benevolent love of self, which *is* consistent with a universal benevolence. As Pres. Edwards *very well* says, "Many assert that [*all love* arises from self-love. In order to determine this point, it should be clearly determined what is meant by self-love."

"Self-love, I think, is generally defined, — a man's love of his own happiness: which is short, and may be thought very plain; but indeed is an ambiguous definition, as the pronoun, *his own*, is equivocal, and liable to be taken in two very different senses. For a man's *own happiness* may either (1.) be taken universally, for all the happiness or pleasure which the mind is in any regard the subject of, or whatever is grateful and pleasing to men; or, (2.) it may be taken for the pleasure a man takes in his own proper, private, and separate good."

"Self-love may be taken for the same as his loving whatsoever is grateful or pleasing to him. Which comes only to this, that self-love is a man's liking, and being suited and pleased in that which he likes, and which pleases him; or, that it is a man's loving what he loves. For whatever a man loves, that thing is grateful and pleasing to him, whether that be his own peculiar happiness or the happiness of others. And if this be all that they mean by self-love, no wonder that they think that all [voluntary] love may be resolved into [or

be said to spring from] self-love," as its subjective motive. Now we say this is all that is meant.

"If by self-love is meant nothing else but a man's loving what is grateful or pleasing to him, and being averse to what is disagreeable, this is calling *that* self-love, which is only a general capacity of loving or hating; or a capacity of being pleased or displeased; which is the same thing as [being essential to] a man's having a faculty of will. For if nothing could be either pleasing or displeasing, agreeable or disagreeable, to a man, then he could incline to nothing, and [therefore could] will nothing. But if he is capable of having inclination, will, and choice, then what he inclines to and chooses is grateful to him, whatever that be; whether it be his own private good, the good of his neighbor, or the glory of God. And so far as it is pleasing to him, so far it is a part of his pleasure, good, or happiness." — Edwds. on Virtue, chap. 4, § 1.

To quote the language of Prof. Dugald Stewart: "In prefixing to this chapter the title of *self-love*, the ordinary language of modern philosophy has been followed. . . . The expression, however, is exceptionable, for it suggests an analogy (where there is none in fact) between that regard which every rational being must necessarily have to his own happiness, and those benevolent affections which attach us to our fellow-creatures. There is surely nothing in the former of these principles [i. e. the *involuntary* desire of happiness] analogous to the affection of [*voluntary*] *love*; and therefore to call it by the appellation of *self-love* is to suggest a *theory* in respect to its nature, and a theory which has no foundation in truth."

"The word *philautia* was used among the Greeks nearly in the same sense, and introduced similar inac-

curacies into their reasonings concerning the principle of morals. In our language, however, the impropriety does not stop here; for not only is the phrase *self-love* used as synonymous with the desire of happiness, but is often confounded (in consequence of an unfortunate connection in their etymology) with the word *selfishness*, which certainly, in strict propriety, denotes a very different disposition of mind. In proof of this it is sufficient to observe, that the word *selfishness* is always used in an unfavorable sense, [*whereas self-love, or the desire of happiness, is inseparable from our nature as rational and sensitive beings.*" — Moral Powers, p. 97.

"Reasonable self-love [or a benevolent regard for our highest interest] and conscience are the chief or superior principles in the nature of man: because an action may be suitable to this nature, though all other principles be violated; but becomes unsuitable if either of those are. Conscience and self-love, if we understand our true happiness, always lead us the same way. Duty and interest are always coincident; for the most part in this world, but entirely and in every instance if we take in the future and the whole; this being implied in a perfect administration of things. Thus they who have been so wise in their generation as to regard only their own supposed interest, at the expense and to the injury of others, shall at last find that he who has given up all the advantages of the present world rather than violate his conscience and the relations of life, has infinitely better provided for himself, and secured his own interest and happiness." — Butler's Third Sermon on Human Nature.

"When benevolence is said to be the sum of virtue, it is not spoken of as a blind propension, but as a principle in reasonable creatures and so to be directed by

their reason; for reason and reflection come into our notion of a moral agent." — Butler's Sermon on Love to our Neighbor.

Prof. Stewart, in the same chapter from which the above citation is taken, refers to Aristotle as remarkably coinciding with himself in *his* views of self-love, and in the use of that term.

Aristotle says: "The good man must necessarily be a self-lover; for he will be delighted in performing honorable acts himself, and will benefit others. But the wicked man ought to be so; for he injures both himself and his neighbors by following his evil passions. To the wicked man, therefore, what he ought to do and what he does are at variance; but the good man does what he ought to do; for all intellect chooses what is best for itself. It is true, also, of the good man, that he performs many acts for his friends and for his country, nay, even if it is his duty to die for them; for he will give up money, . . . and, in short, all the good things which others contend for, if he can secure to himself that which is honorable. For he would prefer being pleased a short time exceedingly, than for a long time slightly; and to live one year honorably, than many years in the ordinary manner; and to perform one honorable and great act, rather than many small ones. Those who die for their country, this, perhaps, actually befalls." — Ethics, book ix. chap. 8.

Therefore, according to Aristotle, President Edwards, and Prof. D. Stewart, desire of happiness, or self-love, and the voluntary action of the mind, are to be distinguished; self-love being a constitutional property, — an essential element in the capacity for all voluntary action, right or wrong, and the subjective motive from which all possible moral action must spring. And yet

all of these great and learned men failed to a great extent to conform either their language or their doctrines to these psychological facts, — and facts, too, implied in their own language.

We think it quite probable, that if Aristotle had formed such a system of ethics as consistency with these mental facts requires, the learned world, to say the least, would long before this have perceived the correctness and truth of his system, and acquiesced in it, and thus a true system of ethics would have been permanently established.

We believe also, that if Edwards had constructed such a system of theology as these facts absolutely require in order to be consistent with truth, he would have avoided some, not to say many, important inconsistencies in the doctrines which he taught. In this case, too, he would have been saved from teaching the doctrine in regard to regeneration which is ascribed to him in No. II. of the American Theological Review, and which may be fitly termed the doctrine of physical regeneration, which, of course, implies physical depravity and a physical incapacity of all men either to become holy or to perform a holy act.

We believe also, that had Professor Dugald Stewart, in his teachings of the theory of morality, consistently controlled himself by these well-established psychological facts, the value of his doctrine on this subject would have been more than doubled.

117. What, then, is supreme selfishness, as distinguished from impartial benevolence and from self-love?

(1.) Supreme selfishness is seeking our own happiness in our own way, according to our own pleasure, whatever that may happen to be, without regard to the eternal law of right, and in ways opposed to our

highest present and future and eternal happiness, and in opposition to the true interests and happiness of our fellow-men, to the good pleasure and authority of God, and to the best good of his whole kingdom.

(2.) President Edwards says: "When any one does good to another from confined self-love, which is opposed to a general benevolence, this kind of self-love is called selfishness." All the instinctive, constitutional, natural affections to kindred, — love of country, philanthropy, and humanity, — which, in their *voluntary* exercise, fall short of impartial, general benevolence, are not true and holy virtue. This kind of doing good to others (in these various modes) is often, in common language, when no reference is had to holiness or sin, called benevolence. But as it springs from a narrow, confined, *partial*, and selfish principle, it is not an *impartial*, and therefore not a holy benevolence, — not true virtue. It must come into the category of selfishness, because it belongs to that order of ideas. Natural affections, so far as they are involuntary, have no moral character.

(3.) Selfishness, or "the selfish principle, is not a merely instinctive impulse, not merely that desire of happiness which is inseparable from the nature of a sentient being, but a voluntary state [or choice] or habit of mind, a moral affection which fixes on self as the center of the universe, and refuses to recognize it as man's chief end to glorify God and enjoy him forever." *

(4.) In the exercise of supreme selfishness, a man regards his own happiness as the supreme good; and the proof of this is, that he seeks it in ways that are

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* Views and Reviews by Leonard Bacon, No. ii. p. 113.

inconsistent with, and in opposition to, the best good of the universe. He thus practically prefers his own happiness to the general good. He prefers and seeks the pleasures of sin, rather than the pleasures which he might find in holiness — in the promotion of the best good of the universe. In this way his true interests and happiness cannot be found, but must be prevented. Therefore, in this way they cannot be wisely nor rightly sought. To seek happiness in this way is to prevent our own and the general good, and is therefore sin.

"Moral evil is in itself, or in its own nature, odious, and the proper object of disapprobation and abhorrence. By its own nature, I mean its [*tendency* to evil, the dishonor of the Deity, and the misery or diminution of the happiness of the created system."

"The essence of moral evil is, that it [*tends* to impair the good and happiness of the universe; in that the odiousness of sin or moral evil consists." *

(5.) Supreme selfishness is the essential principle of sin, — the source whence spring all the specific sinful acts of supremely selfish, unsanctified men. Seeking happiness for ourselves in this way is in violation of the eternal law of right, the transgression of which is sin. For these reasons it cannot be consistent with duty, much less can duty demand, that we should seek our happiness in this way. To seek it in benevolence, then, is the only alternative.

118. What, then, is supreme, impartial, universal benevolence, as distinguished from self-love and selfishness?

(1.) True, impartial benevolence, or "the benevolent principle, . . . is not a mere constitutional capacity of

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* Dr. Edwards's Works, vol. i. pp. 38, 43.

being moved to choice by the contemplation of the general happiness, but an habitual state of the will, involving [elective] preference, — an immanent determination, blending with the excitement of the sensibility, and constituting a [right and holy] moral affection." "The saint is actuated by awakened desires, which have their gratification in the welfare of the universe and in the glory of God, [while] the sinner, in whom that higher capacity of his nature is slumbering or suppressed, is actuated by no other desires than those which have their gratification in his own personal and separate interest," * *separated* in all cases from the supreme and general good.

(2.) In the exercise of enlightened, enlarged, and supreme benevolence, a man regards the greatest happiness of the universe (of course including his own), together with the necessary means of that happiness, as the supreme and ultimate good to be sought, and he seeks his own happiness, not exclusively, nor as the supreme good, but according to its value as a part of that good, and of course as a subordinate good, — he also seeks his own, not as being opposed to, but he seeks it *by* promoting the supreme good, and as necessarily involved in that good.

(3.) Supreme benevolence is a supreme regard for the highest good, including the highest happiness and the highest holiness of the universe (as a whole, and as made up of individuals), as a better and a higher good than any other which can ever come in competition with it. The true interest, the highest good, the most valuable happiness of a probationer, therefore, can never come in competition with the supreme good.

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* Views and Reviews, No. ii. p. 113.

Therefore, the strongest desire of, and the strictest and wisest regard to, united with the most ardent and persevering pursuit of, one's personal and true interest and happiness, all together, are not inconsistent with, but are actually demanded by, supreme, impartial, and universal benevolence; and in reality constitute that true benevolence, and are therefore identical with it.

(4.) True benevolence is termed *supreme*, because it is a choice to promote, as far as is in our power, the *supreme good*, — the *summum bonum*, rather than any less good or any thing else which can come in competition with it. Dr. Emmons says: "The law . . . which is founded in the nature of things, requires men to seek holiness and happiness for themselves and others." The good Samaritan "placed his happiness in the happiness of others, which is the essence of holy in distinction from selfish love." "The Supreme Being designed from eternity to promote his own felicity in giving existence and happiness to his creatures."

(5.) Pres. Edwards says: "In some sense the most benevolent, generous person in the world seeks his own happiness in doing good to others; because he places his happiness in their good. His mind is so enlarged as to take them, as it were, into himself. Thus when they are happy he feels it; he partakes with them and is happy in their happiness. This is so far from being inconsistent with free beneficence, that on the contrary free benevolence and kindness consist in it.

"True virtue most essentially consists in benevolence to [sentient] being in general," * and this consists in love to the general happiness, and contains the primordial elements, the essential constituents, of holiness.

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* Last End, chap. 1, sec. 4.

(6.) Benevolence is the grand, primary, and only source of all the specific forms of holy action; so that all holy acts are comprehended in true benevolence. Seeking our own happiness in the exercise of benevolence, to the extent which the law demands, is the promotion of the highest amount of universal happiness in our power, — it is perfect obedience to the eternal, unoriginated law of right, and is, therefore, right, virtuous, and holy action.

119. In regard to our own happiness, why are we bound to seek it in the exercise of benevolence, rather than selfishness?

Of all that we have said on this point this is the sum.

Since we must either seek our personal happiness as the supreme good, or seek it in promoting *the general happiness as the supreme good*, and since we both cannot and ought not to find the highest kind and degree of our personal happiness by seeking it as the supreme good, but can find the highest kind and degree of it by seeking it in promoting the general good as the supreme good; therefore, we ought to seek it in the exercise of benevolence. Or thus,

Since we are under the inevitable necessity of seeking our happiness in selfishness or benevolence, and since we cannot find our true happiness in selfishness, we cannot be under obligation to seek it in that way; and since we can find it in the exercise of benevolence, it follows, from each of these reasons separately, and from them all unitedly, that we ought to seek our true interest and happiness in benevolence; and because, in benevolence we seek the highest general good as supremely valuable.

In short, we ought to seek our highest happiness in

benevolence, because to do this is the only way in which we can find it, or exercise benevolence, or seek to promote the general good.

120. What, then, for the above reasons, is the *moral* relation which every person sustains to his own personal happiness?

From the truths contained in the above statements, it follows that we are morally bound to seek our own personal happiness, *not at all* in selfishness, but in pure, holy benevolence.

To let the argument have its full force, consider the following simple form of its truth. Since every moral agent is under the absolute necessity of seeking his own happiness in all his moral action, — since he *ought not*, and cannot find his *highest* happiness in selfishness, and since seeking his own happiness, in the exercise and habitual practice of impartial and universal benevolence, is the way, and the only possible way, in which he can either obtain his highest happiness, or do his duty and be holy, — it follows most logically, that every moral accountable being *ought* to seek his own personal happiness in all he does, by and in the habitual exercise and practice of impartial, general benevolence.

To do this would be to place and to seek his own individual happiness in promoting the highest amount of general happiness in his power, — this would be to fulfil the proper end of his being, — the end for which he was made, and, of course, this would fulfil the preference, the will and command of God in the highest and best sense.

"Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall grant thee the desires of thine heart." — Ps. 37: 4. Take your pleasure in doing the will of God, and such desires for happiness shall be gratified.

"Resolved, that I will do whatsoever I think to be most to God's glory and my own good, profit, and pleasure in the whole of my duration; without any consideration of the time, whether now or never so many myriads of ages hence." — Pres. Edwards.

"A practical regard to what is, upon the whole, our happiness, . . . is not only coincident with the principle of virtue or moral rectitude, but is a part of the idea itself." "So little cause is there for moralists to disclaim this principle." — Butler's Analogy, p. 162.

To act from the principle of a truly wise, enlarged, and benevolent regard to our own highest interest and happiness on the whole, in the long run, is precisely one and the same thing with acting from an enlightened and benevolent regard to the highest general good on the whole and in the long run. Neither can be done without doing the other.

The fundamental dogma of Edwards, "that the will is as the *greatest apparent* GOOD" (whether it be true in regard to sinful action, or not, as some doubt), there is no doubt about its truth in regard to right action; and it implies two things: (1.) That "GOOD in some form,— that which is to the mind's sensibility good, — that which the mind, at the moment of choosing, views as the *greatest good* [which, can be no other than happiness], — is the ultimate end," * and (2.) That the mind's *desire* of happiness is the primary subjective motive of all choice, and therefore of all holy action.

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* Views and Reviews, No. ii. p. 114.

CHAPTER IX.

BENEVOLENCE MORE PARTICULARLY DEFINED.

In order that we may obtain a true, comprehensive, full, and accurate idea of holiness, let it be borne in mind, that virtue, impartial benevolence, and holiness in the concrete, are one and the same thing; and therefore a correct definition of one is a correct definition of the others. Virtue is benevolence, and benevolence is virtue.

121. What, then, is benevolence as more particularly defined?

(1.) Benevolence primarily consists in the intention of a rational being to do as much good as he can; to promote as great an amount of happiness on the whole as he can; i. e. all he wisely can, and that is *all* he can *promote*, and all which does not interfere with or prevent the greatest good.

(2.) Another comprehensive definition. Benevolence is a voluntary preference, in all cases, of the greatest good in one's power, to any lower and less good, and includes a purpose to pursue, obtain, or promote that good accordingly.

(3.) Benevolence, to be holy, must be supreme, impartial, and universal; impartial love to the highest happiness of each and all rational beings, including a proper regard to the happiness of all sentient beings, according to (what is practically supposable) its proportionate worth.

By an able writer the doctrine of Pres. Edwards is thus stated.

(4.) "Virtue consists in love to sentient beings according to their relative value; in benevolence to them on account of and in proportion [according to the best practicable estimate of that proportion], to the good that does or may exist in them; a preference of the higher and greater to the lower and smaller kind and degree of good; in a hatred of all that opposes the well-being of the universe." — Bib. Sacra, 1853, p. 723.

Dr. Edwards thus states the views of his father, which were also his own.

"Mr. Edwards teaches, that virtue consists in *benevolence*. He proves that every *voluntary* action, which, in its general [*tendency* and ultimate consequences, leads to *happiness*, is virtuous; and that every such action, which has not this [*tendency*, and does not lead to this consequence, is vicious. By happiness, in this case, he does not mean the happiness of *the agent* only or principally, but happiness *in general*, happiness *on the large scale*. Virtuous or holy benevolence embraces both the agent himself and others — all intelligences, wherever found, who are capable of a rational and moral blessedness. All actions, proceeding from such a principle, he holds to be *fit* or *agreeable to the fitness of things* — agreeable equally to *reason*, and to *a well-informed conscience*, or *moral sense*, and to *moral truth;* and agreeable especially to the will of God, who 'is love' or benevolence." — Vol. i. p. 485.

(5.) Virtue is an intelligent purpose, intention, or choice of a moral being, according to the best light and knowledge in his possession, impartially to promote the sum of the most excellent and valuable happiness, for himself and for all others known to be within the reach of his influence, to the full extent which is possible to him, by the best use which he can make of all his powers.

(6.) As a matter of logical necessity, holiness includes the purpose to promote holiness, to the greatest possible extent.

(7.) Complete holiness, i. e. the complete fulfilment of obligation, is that exercise of the will which would secure the harmonious operation of all our mental powers. It is that voluntary use of our powers which is demanded by our moral natures and moral relations, by our reason and conscience, and by a just regard to our cravings for happiness. In holiness the will obeys the instructions of reason, and fulfils the demands of conscience in all its efforts to gratify the sensibility, so that peace, harmony, and blessedness pervades the soul.

122. What is meant by saying that virtue must be an *intelligent* act?

In saying virtue must be an intelligent act, it is not meant that mere intelligence, a mere act of the intellect, can be virtuous, but it is meant that the intellect must be employed, in perceiving the relations, the nature and tendencies of the act to promote some object, or to prevent some other object. No act, good or bad, can be performed without an intelligent perception of some reason or some objective as well as subjective motive for performing it. In every act, good or bad, there must be *perceived* some tendency to promote or prevent happiness or misery.

A voluntary act, dictated and guided by intelligence, is an intelligent act. Although intelligence is not virtue nor sin, it is a condition prerequisite and corequisite to both holiness and sin.

123. Why must virtue be an *intelligent* act?

(1.) The reasons before assigned in q. 30, why a moral act must be the act of a rational being, are in place here.

(2.) Virtuous action is, and must be, obedience to a *known* moral law, in fulfilment of *known* moral obligation. (Comp. qs. 5, 125, 146.)

(3.) It must be performed not only for an intelligent reason, but for a supposed or known good reason. And therefore intelligence is not only prerequisite to the performance of virtuous action, but requisite during its performance. We think a man can no more act virtuously without the exercise of his intellect, than he can without the exercise of his will.

(4.) No moral act can be performed without a knowledge of good and evil. Knowledge of good and evil implies a knowledge, to some extent, of what will promote, or have some tendency to promote, happiness, and of what will prevent, or have some tendency to prevent it, and promote misery. No act can be duty which is not, and cannot be conceived to be, adapted to produce the highest happiness known to be in one's power at the time. No one can be under obligation to do that which he cannot know, or reasonably judge, to be promotive of happiness.

In order that a person should perform a virtuous act, he must know of some acts which he can perform, that will produce happiness. Of those acts within his power, he ought to perform such as, according to the best evidence within his reach, he judges to be best adapted to promote happiness or prevent misery.

To be virtuous in the highest degree, an act must be the one which, according to his best judgment, is best adapted to the promotion of happiness, within a person's knowledge and power. And if it be so, his obligation for the time being is fulfilled, no more can be required of him.

(5.) If an act have no *perceived* adaptation nor ten-

dency to produce happiness nor prevent misery in any degree, there can be no possible motive nor reason for performing, and of course no possibility of performing it, and therefore there can be no obligation to perform such an act as has no tendency to produce happiness.

(6.) An act, before it is performed, must be intelligently perceived to have an adaptation, and according to the common course of things, a probable tendency, to accomplish a good result, — to promote happiness; and it must be designed to accomplish that result, or there can be no benevolence in the act when performed. An act cannot be known to be benevolent, until it is known that it is a design to be useful. He who does not know enough to know that benevolence is a design to promote happiness, or, which is the same thing, to be useful, does not know what benevolence is. Hence it is concluded, that as soon as an act is known to be benevolent, it is known to be a design to be useful, and therefore known to be a useful design. Knowing one is knowing the other.

(7.) It is the office of reason, in its capacity of conscience, to know moral good from moral evil, — to approve the good and disapprove the evil. A rational being must have a knowledge of moral good and evil, in order to have any emotion in view of right and wrong acts. The peculiar feeling of the sensibility consequent (in the order of nature, if not of time) upon the approbation given by our reason to a virtuous act, is excited by a perception of the understanding or reason. This feeling is the effect, and not the cause, of the perception. The feeling is an exercise of the sensibility; the perception is an act of the intellect or reason. The feeling is produced by the perception. Say, if you please, they exist at the same time. Nevertheless, the

perception is the cause of the feeling, and is first in the order of nature, first logically, if not chronologically.

The reason must be used in perceiving the tendencies of our acts, or we cannot know what we ought to do, nor what we ought to refrain from doing. When, with the eye of reason, we see an act to be designedly adapted to secure the well-being of ourselves and others, we give it the approbation of our reason or conscience; and we have at the same time a peculiar feeling of happiness and satisfaction, which is excited in our sensibility, by this intelligent perception of the virtuousness of that act. By this it is manifest that we know what is right and virtuous by the dictates of our reason and conscience, rather than by those emotions of our sensibility which are excited by the perceptions of our reason. Therefore our reason or conscience is a law to us, and it is a law which God has given us. The perception of what is right and wrong, and of the difference between them, is one of the offices of conscience, and is prerequisite to all moral acts, right or wrong.

"Man finds within himself and in his own [*reason* the rule he ought to follow; and, since the counsels which reason gives him point out the shortest and safest road to his [*perfection and happiness*, from thence a principle of obligation or cogent motive to square his actions by this primitive rule." — Burlamaqui, p. 47.

124. Why ought a virtuous act to be in accordance with the *best* light and knowledge which the agent, in the opportunities afforded him, can obtain?

Wisdom is profitable to direct, and if any wisdom is profitable, the more the better. If knowledge is power, then the more wisdom and knowledge one can obtain, the more power he will have to do good.

No one can be under obligation to do better than he can do, or than he can know how to do. Every one is under the same obligation to know his duty as well as he can know it, that he is under to know it at all. And every one is under the same obligation to do as well as he can know how to do, that he is under to do well at all. No one can be under obligation to do good, any further than he can know, or reasonably judge, what is productive of good.

125. "Is a capacity to know our duty necessary to moral agency?"

"The meaning of this question," says Dr. Edwards, "I conceive to be whether a capacity to know our duty or obligation in any case, be necessary to the existence of moral obligation in that case; and whether duty or moral obligation can extend any further than our capacity to know our duty? In this sense of the question, I answer, that a capacity to know our duty is necessary to moral agency.

"Capacity is power and opportunity. Power to know our duty is the power of rational understanding, and implies that the subject is a rational being; and if capacity to know our duty be not necessary to moral agency, neither is it necessary that we be possessed of reason. But we may be as stupid as brutes, and yet be moral agents."

"If an incapacity of knowing our duty be not inconsistent with moral agency, natural inability to do duty is not inconsistent with it." "I presume it will be granted, that knowledge, and the capacity and means of knowledge, of our duty, aggravate sin in any case, and that the less knowledge and the less capacity for knowing duty a person has, the less is his sin. Sin, then, is diminished in the same proportion as the capac-

ity of knowledge is. And why is it not entirely extinguished when capacity is? Surely some substantial reason must be given to show that this is not the effect.

"Where no law is, there is no transgression. But can a law be said to exist in regard to a person who has no power or capacity to know the law? Suppose God should send us a law written in the language of the [Northwest Indians] . . . would it be a law with respect to us, so that, without any means of knowing its contents, we should be bound to obey it?"

"It will not be denied, that no law is binding on a creature which is not a just and a good law, subservient to the general good; and that God is incapable of enacting any other than such a law. Now, is not a law requiring services which the creature, if he be ever so attentive and candid, and though he be perfectly holy, is incapable of understanding, an unjust law? And is it not manifest that such a law would not be a good law, and not subservient to the general good or the glory of God? . . . We neither are nor can be bound to do any thing which we are incapable of knowing to be our duty." — Vol. ii. pp. 5, 12, 515.

"God never did and never will place an intelligent creature in any situation in which it is naturally impossible for him to know his duty." — Dr. Emmons, vol. iv. p. 296.

"God never requires of any sinner of the human family, in order to his salvation, that which he has not the knowledge of, and the ability to perform." — Bib. Sacra, 1857, p. 192.

"In order to discharge an obligation we must be first acquainted with it, we must know what we do, and be able to square our actions by a certain rule." — J. J. Burlamaqui on Natural Law, p. 45.

"Morality requires not only that a man should act according to his judgment, but that he should use the best means in his power that his judgment be according to the truth. If he fail in either of these points he is worthy of blame; but if he fail in neither, I see not wherein he can be blamed." — Reid, vol. iii. p. 257.

"The person obliged must have understanding and will, and some degree of active power. He must not only have the natural faculty of understanding, but the means of knowing his obligation. An invincible ignorance of this, destroys all moral obligation." — Ibid. p. 154.

"To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not to him it is sin." — James 4 : 17.

"If ye were blind, ye should have no sin." — John 9 : 41.

126. Why must *happiness* be the last end aimed at and sought in all virtuous action? (See qs. 73, 74.)

(1.) All voluntary action must have an objective motive, — an object chosen and sought, — an end aimed at; and happiness is that end, because it is the only ultimate end which is possible. And since happiness is the ultimate end of all possible voluntary action, it must be the ultimate end of all holy action.

(2.) Happiness is the only possible ultimate end of voluntary action, because it is the only absolute good; the only good complete in itself, irrespective of and separate from all its relations. There is no other good that is good irrespective of all its relations. Holiness is not a good irrespective of its relations to happiness, of aiming and tending to secure it.

Remark. When one degree of happiness, or the happiness of one person, or the happiness of many persons, is the means of other happiness, then so far as

it is so it is relative good as well as absolute good; it is relative good because it has the relation of means to other good.*

"It is manifest that nothing can be of consequence to mankind or any creature, but happiness. This, then, is all which any person can, in strictness of speaking, be said to have a right to. We can, therefore, *owe no man any thing*, but only to further and promote his happiness according to our abilities. And therefore a disposition and endeavor to do good to all with whom we have to do, in the degree and manner which the different relations we stand in to them require, is a discharge of all the obligations we are under to them." — Butler's Sermon on Love to our Neighbor.

"That and that only is a curse to a person, which, taken in its proper connections and dependencies, renders him more miserable than he would be without it. On the contrary, that is a blessing to a person, which, taken in its proper connection and dependencies, renders him more happy than he would be without it. It is just as great a blessing and just as great a privilege as happiness itself." † "The very idea of sin is a damage to the universe, a dishonor to God, and an injury to the creature." ‡ "Goodness always acquiesces in that which is consistent with the general good." § "The general good is the measure of justice." ‖ "The law of nature is founded on the general good. Whatever the general good requires, reason requires in every instance; and whatever reason requires, the law of nature requires." — Dr. Edwards's Works, vol. ii. p. 255.

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* In further consideration of this question see Note E. sec. 3.

† Dr. Edwds's Works, vol. i. p. 27.

‡ Ibid. p. 136. § Ibid. p. 137. ‖ Ibid. p. 256.

On this topic we have Milton's views in the following lines:

"To whom the tempter murm'ring thus reply'd.
Think not so slight of glory; therein least
Resembling thy great Father: He seeks glory,
And for his glory all things made, all things
Orders and governs; not content in heav'n
By all his angels glorify'd requires
Glory from men, good or bad,
Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption,
Above all sacrifice, or hallow'd gift,
Glory he requires, and glory he receives
Promiscuous from all nations, Jew or Greek,
Or barbarous, nor exception hath declared;
From his foes pronounc'd glory he exacts.
To whom our Saviour fervently reply'd.
And reason; since this Word all things produc'd,
[*Though chiefly not for glory as prime end*,
But to show forth his goodness, [*and impart*
His good communicable to every soul
Freely; of whom what could be less expected
Than glory and benediction, that is thanks.
The slightest, easiest, readiest recompense
From them who could return him nothing else,
And not returning that would likeliest render
Contempt instead, dishonor, obloquy?
Hard recompense, unsuitable return
For so much good, so much beneficence.
But why should man seek glory, who of his own
Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs
But condemnation, ignominy, and shame?
Who for so many benefits receiv'd
Turn'd recreant to God, ingrate and false,
And so of all true good himself despoil'd,
Yet sacrilegious to himself would take
That which to God alone of right belongs:
Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,
That who advance his glory, not their own [as chief]
Them He himself to glory will advance." *

* Paradise Regained, book 3, lines 108–144.

"The goodness of God is that glorious attribute by which he is disposed to communicate happiness to his creatures." — Dr. Edwards's Works, vol. i. p. 121.

"The perfect goodness of God doubtless implies that he made all things with a design to promote good on the whole, or on the large scale; so that, taking the system of intelligent creatures together, there shall be the greatest possible happiness in it." — Ibid. vol. ii. p. 204.

The following question was given to Dr. Bellamy by Dr. Davies, President of New Jersey College, and was handed over by Dr. Bellamy to Dr. Hopkins:

127. "Is happiness so essential to the goodness of the universe, that it is so much the more perfect or excellent by how much the more happiness there is in it?"

To this question, Dr. Hopkins replied and said: "I answer in the affirmative. Doubtless, happiness is something in itself valuable, which is to be valued, desired, and sought for its own sake. And if so, then the more there is of it the better; and that system which has the most happiness in it is the best and most perfect; and that plan alone is absolutely perfect in which there is provision for the highest possible degree of happiness." — Park's Memoir of Hopkins.

"The law of nature is the law of reason; and the law of reason is the law of the general good of the moral system, — the law which is entirely regulated by the general good, and which requires what that requires, and forbids and threatens only what that forbids and threatens." — Dr. Edwards, vol. ii. p. 256.

"Real and extensive goodness, such as the goodness of God, is always governed by the general good, and seeks what is required by that only. It would be no

goodness, but the very opposite of goodness, to seek an object which . . . does on the whole, and with respect to the entire system, obstruct good and happiness." — Ibid. p. 255.

"Nothing is more evident than that an action does not merit the name of benevolent, unless it be done from a belief that it [*tends* to promote the good of our neighbor," and, by consequence, the general good. — Reid's Works, vol. iii. p. 259.

These extracts imply that happiness is the ultimate object, and therefore that utility is an essential element in the idea of virtue, and that it is essential to the foundation of moral obligation.

128. In what sense is the happiness of the agent the *ultimate* end of his own holy action, and in what sense is the happiness of others the *ultimate* end of that action?

(1.) Let it be observed that, in answering this question, we view the psychological or mental facts in the order in which they take place in holy action. By the ultimate end of holy action we mean the final, the last result sought in the order of time. *First.* Then there is a rational agent, having an intelligent mind constituted with a nature in which the susceptibility of the desire of happiness is an inseparable element. *Second.* Then there are various objects which afford pleasure to him, and therefore excite this desire. Among other objects, the greatest general happiness of others gives him pleasure, and thus excites this desire. *Third.* The agent chooses to gratify this desire by promoting that happiness of others, and he promotes it to the extent of his power. *Fourth.* And this, finally, results in the gratification of that desire which was excited by the happiness of others.

This *gratification* is the happiness of the agent, and is the final result sought in himself by his holiness. It is the final, *internal* end which was sought and is obtained in himself, in the happiness of which he is the *subject.* This happiness of the agent, then, we call the final, *internal, subjective* object or end of his holy choice and action. This *greatest happiness of others*, chosen, sought, and promoted, we term the final, *external, objective* object and end of his holy choice and action. We call it external, to distinguish it from that end sought and found within the agent. We term it the *objective* object and end, to distinguish it from the *subjective* end. Each one of these ends is the final, ultimate, last end *possible* of its kind sought in holy action.

(2.) The mind chooses among the different objects with which it is pleased because it is pleased, and because it prefers the pleasure which may be derived from some of those objects above the pleasure which can be derived from other objects; "but it never chooses between being pleased and being displeased. In this sense it is, then, that in [our] view, the *love* of happiness is the 'primary subjective motive,' and the happiness of the agent is the ultimate [subjective] end of all choice and voluntary action;" (Rev. Leonard Bacon's Views and Reviews, No. II. p. 116;) and, therefore, of all holy action performed by him. Every sane mind chooses the happiness to be derived from some object, comprehending in that object a greater or less amount of various good; and he pursues that object as the chief source of his pleasure, rather than the happiness which could be derived from other sources.

The holiness of a holy mind consists in seeking and finding his happiness in loving and serving and pleasing God, in contemplating and promoting the highest

happiness, and of course the highest holiness, of all the subjects of his moral government. In this sense it is, then, in our view, that the highest happiness of all includes, first, not only the ultimate *objective* object and end, but, second, the final *subjective* end, and therefore the supreme, ultimate end also of all holiness. In this it appears that the supreme, ultimate end of all holiness consists in these two ends, viz. the subjective and objective ends united in one. And thus the highest happiness of all sentient beings is seen to constitute the supreme and ultimate end of all holy action, while the sinfulness of the sinful mind consists in seeking his own pleasures as the supreme good.

(3.) These ultimate objects of pursuit can be accomplished only by accomplishing all the objects which are necessarily both subordinate and subservient to these objects themselves; and therefore the objects of holy action include all the subordinate as well as the final, ultimate objects, and they include the final, external, *objective* objects, as well as the ultimate, internal, *subjective* objects.

The foregoing views of these undeniable mental facts plainly show for themselves that they are not justly chargeable with implying the "preposterous doctrine, that every man may and must make his own happiness his ONLY *and* ultimate *object* [or that it is even the *virtuous* man's only ultimate object] in all that he does; and that all benevolence and self-denial, all justice, truth, purity, and mercy are merely mercenary, and differ from selfishness only in name." — Ibid. No. I. p. 111. Therefore, acting consistently for the promotion of the supreme good is the true way in which *it is our duty* (and it is the only way which is consistent with our duty) *to seek our highest happiness.*

Therefore this is not selfishness. This is the way, and the only way, in which any rational being can secure, either his own highest good and blessedness for time as well as for eternity, or the greatest public good in his power.

This is the only way to deserve the approbation of reason, of conscience, and of God. This is the only possible way either to avoid selfishness or to do right, or to 'act worthy of the rational beings God has made us.' But in this way these three things can all be done.

Agreeable to these views are the following of Dr. Edwards: —

(4.) "For any being to love himself is to love his own happiness. But all God's happiness consists in producing a happy creation; otherwise he is not a benevolent being. [?] Now, to say that God regards his own happiness infinitely more than he does that on which all his own happiness depends, is manifestly not true. The proposition rests on the supposition, that God has a private, selfish happiness, not consisting in benevolence and beneficence."

"God makes himself his end as he makes his happiness his end. But the happiness which he makes his end is the happiness which he takes in benevolence and beneficence, or the happiness which he takes in the perfect and highest happiness of the created universe. So that to make himself his [subjective] end, and to make the happiness of the creation his [objective] end, is perfectly one and the same thing." — Quoted from the Memoir of Dr. Hopkins, p. 205.

"As the glory of God, and the greatest happiness of the system of the universe, and even of the created system, mutually imply each other; whenever I mention

either of them, I wish to be understood to include in my meaning the other also." — Dr. Edwards, vol. i. p. 121.

In accordance with the above is the following sentiment of Dr. Hopkins.

"And though we are wont to speak of the glory of God and the happiness of the creature as distinct things, and as different and separate ends, which God has in view in his works; yet they are perhaps in reality one and the same, and viewed as such by the divine all-comprehending mind."— Memoir of Hopkins, p. 229.

To prepare the way for the next question, let it be premised that the same thing may be primary or ultimate, according as the facts concerning which an inquiry is made, are arranged in the mind in a particular order or the reverse of that order. If these facts have one order, in the mind, a certain fact inquired after will be *primary.* If they have the reversed order it will be *ultimate.*

129. Is the constitutional sensibility and desire of happiness an *essential* element in the *ultimate* foundation of moral obligation?

Since it is true, "that there cannot be a voluntary agent without the capacity of being *pleased* or *dis*pleased, or who does not *necessarily prefer* being pleased to being *dis*pleased, or who can possibly act voluntarily, except by acting as he is pleased to act; that every *objective* motive, in order to be a motive, must appeal to some sensibility or desire of the mind that is to be moved by it, while the subjective motive is nothing else than the awakened desire moving the mind to choose; and nothing can possibly be chosen which is not desired, and nothing can be desired which does

not seem desirable," * therefore, it most logically follows, that the constitutional sensibility or desire of happiness is an essential element in the ultimate or lowest foundation of moral obligation. Without this desire of happiness, *no power* could exist to act morally.

And it also follows as certainly, that *tendency* to awaken this sensibility and gratify this desire, consisting in a *tendency* to promote highest happiness, belongs to and is an element in the intrinsic, essential nature of holiness. And further, this must all be so, because ability to fulfil obligation is the foundation, and therefore the measure, of that obligation.

If we were to "ask any obedient or holy mind on earth or in heaven,"

130. "*Why* do you obey God, *why* do you devote yourself to his praise and his service [and to honor him in all his authority], why employ your faculties and powers [in doing right] in this course of benevolent action?" — Ibid. 112.

He might very naturally and truly answer, "Because I love it, because I delight in it, because it is my blessedness, my highest good," because I esteem the highest possible holiness and happiness of the universe the supreme good; the *summum bonum*. And therefore I seek *my* highest good in promoting the *supreme* good, and because this is the way to secure the highest degree of happiness which is the only possible ultimate good.

In this answer, the last reason, that can with propriety be asked for, is given. And this is the last reason that can be given in answer to the *why*, and at the same time be based upon the true foundation of moral obligation.

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* Views and Reviews, No. i. p. 111.

"He who 'hungers and thirsts after righteousness,' who says to God 'thou art the strength of my heart and *my portion* forever,' — 'whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee,' 'as the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee,'" * in so doing and saying does not subvert the foundation principle of right, equity, honor, and duty.

"This instinctive, innate, irresistible yearning after good is the ultimate reason," the last reason that can be given for holy action, which would contain the true answer to the question now before us. In this order of viewing the subject, this sensibility or desire of happiness is strictly and metaphysically ultimate, there being nothing in the agent beyond it, to which holy action may be referred, and nothing anywhere else, but in the Creator's will, who made us what we are. Or, reversing this order of viewing the facts, that which was before *ultimate*, becomes primary. These constitutional sensibilities and desires, with which men come into existence, and which prompt to all moral action both good and bad, are anterior and prerequisite to, and therefore are, the primary motives of all moral action and of course of all holy action, and for these reasons must constitute an essential element in the foundation of moral obligation.

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* Views and Reviews, No. i. p. 112.

CHAPTER X.

SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED. — TENDENCY OF VIRTUE TO HIGHEST HAPPINESS.

131. WHY must a virtuous act, in its intrinsic nature, have an efficacious tendency to produce happiness?

An act having, and known to have, no such tendency in its true and proper nature, is an impossibility, and would be perfectly worthless if it were possible.

(1.) No object whatever can be desired, or in any sense either voluntarily or involuntarily loved, or chosen, or sought after, except it be known, or be supposed to have an efficacious tendency to afford to the agent some degree of pleasure or happiness. 'All choice is to be happy. No man can make any choice, right or wrong, which excludes all happiness as the object of that choice. Such a choice is inconceivable.'

No intelligent, voluntary act, which is known to exclude from its true nature all efficacious tendency to produce happiness in its agent, can be performed, because there can be no desire to perform it; and without a desire there can be no motive, and without a motive there can be no possibility of performing the act, and without a possibility there can be no obligation to perform such an act.

(2.) No act can be duty, unless it be supposed to have an efficacious tendency to produce the highest sum of *general* happiness known to be in one's power. When two or more acts are before the mind,

which are known to be possible, and one of them is known to have a more efficacious tendency to promote happiness than any other, moral obligation requires that that act should be performed which is known to be most productive of happiness. Whatever act is known to be more productive of happiness, than any other act is which we know to be within our power, that act is our duty. Duty must always be within the limits of our power to do it, and to know what it is.

(3.) Any act or thing that is not happiness, and which has no efficacious tendency to produce happiness, is good for nothing. Any such thing or act is perfectly worthless, and cannot be good in any sense. It can be neither absolute good nor relative good, neither natural good nor moral good. It has no value in any sense whatever. Any thing and every thing, besides happiness, that has no tendency in its nature to produce happiness, has no natural goodness. Therefore, an act of *will*, in some of its relations, must have a tendency in its nature to produce happiness, or it will not have any *natural* goodness. It must have an *intended tendency* to *promote* happiness, or it will not have any moral goodness, — it will not be virtuous. But if it has *such* a tendency, it will be, to some extent, *effectual* to produce and promote happiness.

"Nothing is more evident than that an action does not merit the name of benevolent, unless it be done from a belief that it [*tends* to promote the good of our neighbor." * And then, not rightness, but happiness, is ultimate end.

"While [President] Edwards believed that virtue is a good in itself, and vice an evil in itself, he yet believed

* Dr Reid. Fifth Essay on the Active Powers, p. 259.

that the *chief* good of the creatures' virtue consists in its being an object of *holy* pleasure to the Creator and a means of manifesting his glory; and that the chief evil of sin consists in its being an object of holy displeasure to the Creator and a means of tarnishing his glory."* Of course, Edwards could not consistently mean by virtue's being a good in itself, that it is a good separated from all its tendencies, and apart from its being a source of pleasure to the Creator and a *means* of manifesting his glory. As adapted to these ends, in this sense, most surely virtue is a good in itself, and therefore a relative, but not an absolute, ultimate good. To be a means of manifesting the glory of God, and to be the means of promoting the highest happiness of the universe, is one and the same thing. That which will accomplish one, will accomplish the other.† The chief good of virtue, therefore, consists in the benevolent tendency of its nature, by which it is voluntarily adapted to be the means of highest happiness; and the chief evil of sin consists in its malicious tendency to prevent happiness and promote misery.

(4.) An act, to be virtuous, must have a tendency in its nature to excite that feeling of peculiar happiness called the feeling of approbation. And this tendency of the act must be seen and felt before the act is performed, or the act cannot be known to be duty before it is performed, and therefore will not be duty when performed.

(5.) If virtue is correctly defined to be that which excites the feeling of complacency, — a feeling of pecul-

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* Bibliotheca Sacra, 1853, p. 722. Review of Edwards on Virtue.

† See qs. 126–128, the quotations from Dr. Hopkins and Dr. Edwards.

iar happiness, called the feeling of approval and expectation of reward, then, tendency to produce that peculiar happiness surely belongs to the nature of virtue according to the definition, as well as in accordance with truth. For, if virtue had no tendency to excite this happy feeling of approval in a being, he could have no desire to perform a *holy* act because it was holy. He could not even try to gain his own approval, nor the approval of any other being. He would be wanting in one of the constituent elements of conscience, which is one of the essential elements in the nature of a moral being.

Again; if virtue had in its nature no tendency to excite the soul's desire of happiness, then it could not be an object of either voluntary or involuntary love, desire, or choice, and then to make a holy choice (because it was holy, as any part of the reason for making it) would be an impossibility. But all this would subvert the important, the known and admitted truth, "That we have an instinctive, constitutional love of happiness subjectively prompting us to all acts, right or wrong."

(6.) If there were no tendency in a supposed act or choice to produce some degree of one's own happiness, then, as we have already seen, there would be nothing in its nature to excite a desire to perform such act, and nothing in it, if performed, to gratify such desire, because the gratification of that desire would be some degree of happiness; and whatever should gratify such a desire would have an efficacious tendency to produce happiness. But, by the supposition, the act, purpose, or choice is to have no tendency whatever to be the means of happiness to any being. And then, as we have seen above, for a rational being to perform such

an act would be an unqualified impossibility, and therefore no obligation could exist to perform such an act. Even the martyr takes pleasure in confessing Christ, to such an extent that he goes to the stake so filled with joy that he is enabled to triumph over the sufferings of death, even amid the flames.

(7.) But suppose we could dispose of this difficulty, which arises from a want of a tendency in the supposed act to promote the *present* gratification of the agent; — if now it were possible to perform the act (which, in truth, it would not be), even then, we could gain nothing of *future* happiness by the performance of the act, for, by the supposition, it is to have in its true nature no tendency whatever to produce happiness, present or future. It must not be the means of happiness to one's self here nor hereafter.

(8.) But suppose this difficulty also were obviated, and now, without any prospect of any possible gain or happiness to ourselves, now or in the future, we set ourselves by some act of ours to promote the happiness of others, — but, by the supposition, the act is to have in its nature no adaptation or tendency to promote happiness for ourselves, nor for any other being, — there certainly can be no benevolence in an act known beforehand to have such a character.

(9.) The question now before us may be answered, again, as follows: —

All holiness is voluntary production, to some extent, of foreseen, intended happiness. As a matter of fact, and of admitted fact, holiness always is a design to produce happiness, and always does produce designed happiness, to a greater or less extent. As a matter of fact, then, holiness has, in its unchangeable nature, an efficacious tendency to produce happiness, which is in

reality productiveness of happiness. Such, in its unchangeable nature, is the holiness of God.

All the evidence that God has exhibited to us of his benevolence or holiness, has been done by its *designed effects*. "He has not left himself without witness, in that he doeth good, filling our hearts with food and gladness." This, his goodness to us, consists in his production of our happiness. He has proved to us his benevolent design by the results of that design, viz. making us happy, by sending us rain from heaven, fruitful seasons, food and gladness. He has proved his character and acts to be good in the only possible way, viz. by their effects. By knowing the designed tendencies and effects of his acts in our own happiness, we have evidence that his designs are holy and benevolent. And this appears to comprehend substantially all the evidence of the Divine goodness which the common mind of man is competent to appreciate.

(10.) Sound, unperverted reason, or common sense, decides the nature of things by their properties, effects, and tendencies. All we know of causes (external to our own minds) is by their effects, and by their effects we know some of their tendencies. Common sense, too, decides that the invariable, inseparable tendencies of any thing, in all its circumstances, belong to its nature. Therefore the designed tendencies of holiness to produce, and which invariably do produce, happiness, belong to the intrinsic nature of holiness. These tendencies are elements essential to constitute holiness what it is. For illustration: the tendency of an ox to feed on grass belongs to his nature. The tendency of a lion to feed on flesh belongs to his nature. Fire burns, and powder explodes. It is their nature, in appropriate circumstances, to do so. Not one of these

tendencies, in the same circumstances, can be changed without changing the nature of the subject to which it belongs. The *tendency* of holiness to produce happiness may to some extent be thwarted, but can no more be changed than the *nature* of holiness can be. Neither can be changed without changing the other. And the nature of holiness can no more be changed than ten can be made a thousand, or space be annihilated.

(11.) Without knowing the tendency of holiness to promote happiness, we never could know what the nature of holiness is.

All our knowledge of the natural and inseparable tendencies of things is so much knowledge of their nature. Full and complete knowledge of the nature of things would be knowledge of all their tendencies. That the natural, inseparable tendencies of things belong to their nature, seems to be the necessary and only consistent conclusion. To suppose the contrary, would be to suppose that their natural tendencies were not natural.

"By their fruits [i. e. the effects which they produce] ye shall know them." By their fruits you may know the designed tendencies of their acts, and therefore the nature of their acts and designs, and of course their moral character.

If the nature of things were to be changed, their tendencies would of necessity be changed also. If their tendencies, in given circumstances, were changed, their natures would be changed also. It is inconceivable, while the nature and relations of moral beings shall remain what they now are, that the nature of benevolence should be so changed as not to be productive of happiness.

Thus it is proved that the supposition truly acted

upon, that holy action should have no tendency to produce happiness, would take away from the mind for performing such action all *possible motive*, internal and external, subjective and objective, selfish or benevolent, gaining good for ourselves or others, present or future; so that no desire can be either excited or gratified, and no object can be *gained*, no good be done, by forming the intention, by making the choice, nor by executing it, and therefore all possibility of performing a virtuous act by *this supposition* would be taken away, and with it all moral obligation.

That view of virtue, which would make it an *impossibility*, and which if it were possible would make it a *worthless* thing to all the universe, cannot be true.

If, then, virtue be a reality, if it be any thing in distinction from nothing, efficacious tendency to produce happiness must belong to its essential nature.

In coincidence with the above views we quote the following:

"Moral evil is in itself, or in its own nature, odious, and the proper object of disapprobation and abhorrence. By its own nature I mean its [*tendency* to evil, the dishonor of the Deity, and the misery or diminution of the happiness of the created system." . . . "The [*essence* of moral evil is, that it [*tends* to impair the good and happiness of the universe; in that the odiousness of sin or of moral evil consists." . . . "Moral evil is a voluntary act impairing the general good consisting in the glory of God and the happiness of the created system." — Dr. Edwards, vol. i. pp. 38, 43, 138.

Notice here that moral evil is the opposite of moral goodness.

"The Supreme Being designed from eternity to promote his own felicity in giving existence and happiness

to his creatures." "God is love, and his goodness consists in love." . . . "The perfect goodness of God must move him to make the intelligent universe as holy and [*happy* as [to him is] possible." "The moral law . . . which is founded in the nature of things, requires men to love and seek holiness and happiness for themselves and others. And it requires them to love and seek the . . . blessedness of God." — Emmons, vol. vi. p. 440; vol. iv. pp. 212, 213, 532.

"The worth of virtue . . . consists in its usefulness to the public interest; and the hatefulness of vice in its being detrimental to the general good and happiness." — Dr. Edwards, vol. ii. p. 462.

132. What answer may be given to the claim, 'that the nature of virtue is entirely distinct from all its tendencies and consequences?' *

In opposition to the conclusion that tendency to produce happiness is an essential element in the nature of virtue, it is maintained that virtue is not founded on *any tendency* to produce happiness, not the *highest* happiness of the *agent*, not even the highest happiness of all created beings and the Creator united. It is even maintained of late that the *nature* of virtue is distinct from all its tendencies and consequences, of whatever description,† that "*the nature* of benevolence is one thing, and its tendency another." ‡

As this point is of fundamental importance, and as error here is logically adapted to lead to the subversion of all foundation of moral obligation, notwithstanding the repetition, we judge it important to present the

* See Prof. Haven on the Moral Faculty, Bib. Sac. 1856, p. 263, and his Mor. Philos. p. 49.

† See Bib. Sac. 1853, pp. 720, 721, 733.

‡ Dr. Emmons, vol. iv. p. 226.

subject in several attitudes and bearings, in connection with the following views:

(1.) It may be conceded that virtuous acts may have unintended, unforeseen, and therefore *incidental* tendencies to produce happiness, which happiness, of course, was not intended, — tendencies which are superinduced on the acts, without power on the part of the agents to promote or prevent them, and that these tendencies, whether they exist or not, are not essential to the nature of holiness; e. g. a secret prayer may be overheard, and thus it may awaken and convict a sinner and lead him to repentance and faith in Christ, and in this way this prayer may have an undesigned, unthought-of, and efficacious tendency to secure for him everlasting blessedness.

In many ways right acts may have accidental, consequential tendencies to good and happiness, which their agents never designed or even thought of. But such accidental tendencies as are without any reason to be expected, constitute no element in the moral nature of those acts. These tendencies may be regarded as constituting an accidental, but not the moral goodness of those acts, because this goodness does not necessarily even depend upon their being right. The virtuousness of an act consists in its being an *aim* to *secure*, or to accomplish, and therefore necessarily consists in the natural and proper *tendency* of that act as an aim, *to secure* a *foreseen* result.

(2.) In answering the present question, it may be important here to consider by what reasons (in addition to those noticed in q. 85) some have been induced to believe and to advance the doctrine, that no tendency whatever to produce or promote happiness belongs as an essential element in the nature of virtue.

(i.) One of the reasons assigned to prove the doctrine that no tendency whatever to promote happiness belongs to the nature of virtue is, that to determine the question of tendency would require so much calculation.

For an answer to this argument see q. 146.

(ii.) Another argument alleged in proof of this point is, that the idea of right is a *simple* idea. In answer to this see qs. 236–241, and 133.

(iii.) The dogma that sin, in all cases in which it occurs, is the necessary means of the greatest good, has by many been regarded as a cardinal point in their system of doctrine, and as the basis of a fundamental argument in proof of the goodness of God in the permission of sin. If sin were the necessary means of the greatest good and happiness of the universe as a whole, then sin would have a necessary and efficacious *tendency* to promote that good of which it were the necessary means, and holiness in its place must have an efficacious tendency to prevent that good and happiness. And, then, the tendency of holiness in all such cases would be to prevent happiness, and, of course, to promote misery (which is contrary to the true and generally conceded nature of holiness), and the tendency of sin, also, in all the cases in which it were the necessary means of the greatest good and happiness, would be to promote happiness, which is also contrary to the known nature of sin. Hence the necessity of supposing that the tendencies of both holiness and sin are distinct from their moral nature; and that their tendencies may be changed without changing their natures.

Since the dogma, that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, *is* now extensively, and for the above reasons *ought* to be universally repudiated, the argument

derived from it against the principle, "*that tendency to happiness is an element of holiness*," appears to be entirely without foundation. If tendency to happiness is essential to the nature of holiness, and tendency to misery is essential to the nature of sin, then sin is *not*, but holiness *is*, the necessary means of the greatest good, and therefore the less sin and the more holiness the better.*

(iv.) That holy actions so often do not have a tendency adequate to produce all the happiness designed and sought by their agents in those actions, because they endeavored to promote happiness which was not in their power, may have been a reason with some for supposing that tendency to happiness is not essential to the nature of holiness.

The holiness of such acts may be evident, notwithstanding they have not a tendency of sufficient efficacy to produce all the happiness designed. This want of sufficient tendency does not destroy the moral excellence of those actions. Nor does it show them to be without any tendency to produce designed happiness, nor without a sufficient tendency to produce all the happiness in their agent's power.

That these facts do not interfere with our doctrine, may be seen by these two considerations. First. No man is under obligation to effect what he knows his best efforts would fail to accomplish, nor to *try* to do what the best acts which he can perform are known to have no tendency to accomplish. Secondly. The acts in question have an efficacious tendency to promote happiness to some extent, and that the greatest possible to the agents, if not all that was desired and purposed.

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* See Note D, where these points are further discussed.

When perfectly holy actions are put forth, they always do have a tendency to accomplish all that good which the author knows to be in his power, or which actually is in his power to promote by those actions.

(3.) In proof that *tendency to produce the happiness of the* agent is an element essential to the nature of holiness, and essential to the foundation of moral obligation, and that virtue is not independent of its tendencies and consequences, let us observe,

Those tendencies of holiness, which are essential to the possibility of moral action, and of course to the possibility of holy action, without which holiness could not exist from any cause whatever, must belong to its *intrinsic nature.* (To express the same idea in shorter phrase, That tendency of holiness without which holiness cannot be, must be a property of holiness itself.) (Comp. 108 and 129.)

That instinctive, constitutional love of happiness which subjectively prompts us to all voluntary acts, right or wrong, itself of logical necessity cannot be voluntary, unless there can be one volition before the first; and therefore, it is and must be the involuntary desire of happiness, which results by necessity from the created nature of every human soul, and of course cannot have any moral character: now therefore (as has been fully shown in the preceding discussion), if happiness, in point of time and in the invariable order of pursuit, is the only possible ultimate object of desire and of voluntary action, then this constitutional love or desire of happiness (as has also been shown q. 58, § 10), comprehends all, and is therefore the only possible, *subjective* motive for all voluntary action of the mind both right and wrong, without which no voluntary action is possible, and hence, this desire is prerequisite to all

moral character. From this it follows that all choice is to be happy, and therefore, it is inconceivable that a moral agent should choose any object for any motive not comprehended in the real or supposed *tendency* of that object, and the supposed *tendency* of the choice of that object, to gratify his desire of happiness; and then, it appears to a moral demonstration, that tendency to produce the happiness of the agent inevitably belongs to the intrinsic, essential nature of a virtuous and right act, because without such a tendency a right act would be an absolute impossibility; and then, there would be no foundation for obligation to perform it. In this sense it is that the tendency of a right act to the happiness of the agent is essential to the existence of obligation.

(4.) That it is consistent with holiness to act under the influence of the tendency of holy action to promote the happiness of the agent, is evident from the facts, the precepts and promises recorded in the Holy Scriptures.

Moses acted under the influence of this kind of tendency, when "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: . . . for he had respect unto the recompense of reward." Christ also did the same, when "for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame." — Heb. 11: 25. 12: 22.

John, the revelator, ascribes the same motive to God, when he says, "Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they [*are*, and were created." — Rev. 4: 11.

"To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality; eternal life." — Rom. 2: 7.

If holiness is now what it was in both the Old and New Testament times, we may safely infer, that while

holiness requires us to labor for the highest general good and happiness, as the ultimate *objective* object of all our moral action, it also requires us to labor for our own highest good and happiness as the ultimate *subjective* object, in all our responsible action. And while holiness requires us to seek earnestly to secure for ourselves treasures in heaven,— Matt. 6 : 20,—or which is the same thing, to labor for our own highest eternal good in all we do, the very nature and constitution of our being makes it absolutely necessary (if we do so, or do not), that the *desire* of our own happiness should be the primary subjective motive, and that our *happiness* itself should be the ultimate *subjective* object, of all possible labor; and therefore of all holy labor.

Again: If our spirits are created in the spiritual or intellectual image of the Creating Spirit, and if the holiness of our spirits constitutes in us the moral image of the Divine Spirit, then we may safely infer, that while our own pleasure must be the ultimate *subjective* object in all our voluntary action, the greatest general good possible to us must be our *ultimate objective* object in all right action.

(5.) In confirmation of the sentiment that *tendency to promote the general welfare* is an essential element in the nature of virtue, and that this tendency is essential to the foundation of moral obligation for moral agents to promote the general well-being, let us observe again:

Among the ablest writers on the nature of virtue it is agreed that universal, impartial benevolence, which consists in aiming to promote the greatest and most valuable amount of general happiness, is right, because it *aims* to secure that result: "for what a man aims at, he must foresee and will."

Is it possible so to aim at an object, as to act inde-

pendently of all the tendencies of the aim, and of all the consequences to be produced by it? To ask this question is to answer it. We submit whether it be possible to aim at, foresee and will a result, when we fully believe and know that our action will have no possible tendency to promote, in any degree, that result, any more than it would be possible for a man in his senses seriously to purpose to bring gold from the moon, or from one of the fixed stars; even though he knew that the moon and stars were all made up of golden eagles.

If, in such a case, to aim at any object would be impossible for the want of a possible motive, then that benevolence, which should consist in aiming at the general good and happiness, and should be known to have no tendency to promote it, would be rationally impossible; or if any should claim it to be possible, even then, it could be nothing but perfect folly. For these reasons, tendency to promote general happiness is essential to the nature of holy benevolence, and for the same reasons this tendency is essential to the foundation of obligation to exercise general benevolence. Tendency to produce happiness, then, constitutes one essential element in the intrinsic nature of virtue.

"There is not a plainer truth in morals, than that virtue or moral excellence is founded in its tendency to good." — Dr. Nathaniel Wm. Taylor, quoted from the A. T. R., 1859, p. 395.

To view these points in a still different attitude, let us look at them in the light of the following question: —

133. Is it possible to conceive of a right act (while conceiving of right as a simple, in distinction from a complex idea), which can be performed for no other

actual reason than that the act is right, and as such, entirely separated from all its relations to happiness?

According to the supposition, no other reason is to be conceived by the agent why the act is to be done, but the single conception it *ought*, separated from all conception and desire of happiness, and from *all* desire. By the supposition, the action must not be a design to promote happiness, — it must not be to please God, nor to do good to any creature, nor to supply any want, nor to relieve the distress of any living thing of God's creation, — it must not be to obtain pleasure of any kind; not even that which arises from the approbation of one's own conscience, nor from the approbation of God, nor from that of any other being, nor from any other source. It must not be to gratify any desire whatever, because acting to gratify desire would be acting to gain happiness. Now, it seems to me that no such act can be performed, nor can such an act be even rationally conceived of as right and obligatory, just as surely as that desire is the primary, subjective motive of all possible voluntary action (not to insist that happiness is the only *ultimate* object and end of all such desire and action).

The reason for the act in question, is to be a purely simple idea, abstracted from every element but the uncompounded element of *ought* (if there be any such idea). All idea of interest, profit, advantage, gratification, pleasure, and agreeableness of every kind, both to the agent and all other beings, is to be excluded from the mind, as constituting any part of the reason or motive for performing said act. No kind of *gratification* of any kind of desire, not even of the desire to do a right act, must form any part of the object, because gratification of any desire of the agent, or of any other

being, would be pleasure, which is to be excluded from being any part of the object.

To form the conception of an act as nearly like the act above supposed as possible; let us suppose that you owe a dollar to a man of immense wealth, so great that it is a real and acknowledged trouble to him, he does not know you owe him, and no being on earth besides yourself knows it; so that no disappointment, and no injury of any kind from your not paying the debt, nor benefit from paying it, shall arise to him, — suppose every thing that you can, which would be true in such a case, still conscience will demand that you pay the debt if you are able. If you refuse to pay the debt, conscience will tell you of a law violated and dishonored, which ought to be sustained for the protection of the rights and interests of all the coming generations of men, and of all the vast interests of Jehovah's eternal kingdom.

If you refuse to pay it, conscience will fill you with the painful feelings of shame and remorse; but if you pay it to please God, and to sustain his law and authority, and thus to promote the general welfare, and to satisfy your own desire for peace of conscience, then conscience will give you the delightful feelings of self-approbation, and a consciousness that you have the approbation of God.

Put yourself, then, if it be possible, in a state of indifference in regard to all the considerations of utility, and of all conceivable pleasure, of every kind and degree, and of all beings, and then you may rest assured you cannot pay that debt, or do any other conceivable act, simply and only *because it is right*, for you have set at nought all the considerations which make it right or even possible.

Let us suppose, now, that you set up the claim that you have performed a right act, and performed it for the pure, simple idea, or reason that it was a virtuous and right act, to the exclusion of all possible utility or beneficial consequences of that act, as constituting any part of the object of that act, or of the reason why you performed it.

All the reasoning which you could employ to prove it right, would be reasoning in a circle, with no place to begin and nowhere to end. The supposition of a right act performed for the simple and only reason that it is right, aside from all its relations to happiness, implies that the supposed act is right on account of its being performed from a love of right, without any regard to any happiness of any being, and then that right which is loved must be the love of right, involving the absurdity of an endless series. "Unless the general happiness be finally regarded in holy choice, the definition will involve us in an infinite series of repetitions; so far forth, likewise, as holiness is in the last resort the love of holiness, just so far forth are we involved in an endless circle." — Bibliotheca Sacra, 1853, p. 756.

You cannot say that you have paid the debt for the sake of doing good to any individual, nor to the public, taken collectively; for, doing good implies promoting the happiness of those for whom the good is done. To say that you have paid the debt for the sake of doing right, would imply that you have done it for the pleasure which arises from doing right at the time of doing it, or in the future, or both. In saying this you would concede the point in debate.

Not to insist on this, what is the right for the sake of which you did the deed? A right act, which does not have happiness for its ultimate object, must termi-

nate nowhere but in itself, like a circle, or like the endless chain of a chain pump, or in an endless series, like that just pointed out, and also more fully in the first chapter of Edwards's treatise on the Nature of Virtue.

To bring this point fairly to a full and final decision, let it be observed, in regard to objects of choice, that one of the two following things must be true, —

Either, first, any thing to be an object of choice, must be some degree of pleasure, or something which is esteemed to be either immediately in itself, or in its consequences a source of pleasure, so as to excite a desire for it; or, in the second place, that object of choice must be such an object as can be chosen, when the mind is perfectly indifferent towards it, and has no desire for it, so that the supposed object is no more suited to give a person pleasure than any other object is.

If the consciousness and common sense of mankind are any criterion of truth, the first and only the first of these statements can be true.

Here the whole matter is reduced to this dilemma, either to regard right as a source of pleasure, and practice it accordingly, or, on the other hand, to regard it with indifference and treat it accordingly. Who can doubt which way is true and right?

No act performed in a state of indifference to the right can be done because it is right. The supposition involves a contradiction. No act done without the purpose of doing any good, and with no intention of affording any pleasure to any being in the universe, can be right, and therefore such an act cannot be done because it is right. But if common sense or unperverted reason is no criterion of truth, and if the second of these statements in this dilemma is true (which it cannot be, un-

less a man can do an act without any desire of gaining or promoting happiness for himself or for others, because such an act is right), then it follows that pleasure and pain, and our desires to enjoy the one and shun the other, are *primarily* the *consequences* of and *depend entirely* on our will and choice. And then our will and choice must precede all pleasure and pain and desire, instead of these latter feelings being the prerequisites of all conceivable action of the will, — instead of being preceded by some agreeable emotion, which may excite desire for more pleasure, and thus be a motive for moral action.

If man has such a power, as that pleasure and pain thus depend on will and choice, then who can say that it is not "entirely in a man's power, and depends entirely on his own will, to render Nebuchadnezzar's furnace more pleasant than a bed of down perfumed with roses." — Dr. Edwards.

When man has such power, and not till then, he may do acts called right, while perfectly indifferent towards righteousness, and with no *desire* to do good, or even to perform a right act. But even then, it would be impossible to conceive that such actions would be holy or moral actions at all, or that he had done them because they were right.

But if the *first* part of this dilemma is true, then desire of happiness is prerequisite as a motive, and essential to the possibility of any and all holy actions; and a right action, in order to be possible, must be so suited to our sensibilities as to give us some agreeable emotion, in view of right action, which will excite a desire for that happiness which right action affords.

From the points established in the above reasoning, it appears impossible to avoid the conclusion, that the

Rightarian and Independent theories of morals are destitute of any solid foundation.

Here let an appeal be made to the reader's consciousness. Suppose there is some act of self-denial which you feel under moral obligation to do. Is there nothing immediately pleasant in itself, nor in its consequences, in the idea of righteously fulfilling your obligation, so that you can enjoy the peace and approval of your own conscience, and of all holy beings, and of all other rational beings besides?

Finally, a right act cannot be *conceived* of, which should be done without the intention of doing any good, or of promoting the pleasure of any being in the universe. No such act can be done, and it would not be right if it could.

If you still are not satisfied that the agent's pleasure must be the ultimate *subjective* object of all his holy or benevolent action, consider the following question:—

134. Why cannot a moral agent make the happiness of *others* as *fully*, and in the same sense, the *ultimate* object of his desires and voluntary exertions, as he can his *own* pleasure or happiness?

(1.) Because the constitution and nature of his mental powers and susceptibilities render it impossible.

(2.) Because, in the nature of things, it is impossible that a rational agent should make that an ultimate objective object of desire, choice, or effort, towards which he is indifferent, and for which he has no desire; for that would be to desire without desiring, and to choose without a motive or any reason for choosing, which is absurd.

(3.) Because it is impossible to have either any desire or love, whether it be voluntary or involuntary love, for an object which does not, when properly contemplated, first awaken in the mind some emotion of pleas-

ure, and then a desire for the continuance or increase of that pleasure; and because, to obtain or accomplish the object of our desire or love is to gratify that desire or love, which gratification constitutes the agent's happiness, and therefore *must* be the ultimate *subjective* object of all his doings.

An object must first be regarded as a source of happiness to the mind, before it can desire or love that object. A person cannot first love an object that is not a source of pleasure to him, and thus make it an object of delight and a source of pleasure. The order of nature is, in fact, the reverse of this.

(4.) Again: That nothing can be to a rational agent an ultimate objective object which is not supposed to have a tendency to secure, as the ultimate subjective object of that agent, his own happiness, is decisively shown in the statements which follow.

"Now if there be something which God seeks as agreeable or grateful to him, then, in the accomplishment of it, he is gratified. If the last end which he seeks in the creation of the world be a thing truly grateful to him (as certainly it is, if it be truly his end and truly the object of his will), then it is what he takes a real delight and pleasure in."

"And if there be any such thing at all as what we mean by *acts of will* in God, then he is not indifferent whether his will be fulfilled or not. And if he is not indifferent, then he is truly gratified and pleased in the fulfilment of his will; or, which is the same thing, he has a pleasure in it. And if he has a real pleasure in attaining his end, then the attainment of it belongs to his happiness. That in which God's delight or pleasure in any measure consists, his happiness in some measure consists."

"Whatever is God's last end, . . . is that which he truly delights in." — Last End, chap. 1, § 4.

This reasoning is just as applicable to the human as to the Divine mind.

Dr. Paley's definition of virtue is this: "Virtue is doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, for the sake of [one's] everlasting happiness." We think this definition not sufficiently comprehensive. It does not go deep enough to find the *foundation* of obligation. It is too shallow, in not finding this foundation in the power of promoting happiness according to the eternal, unoriginated rule of right, conformity to which constitutes the holiness of God. God's will is based upon right, instead of being the foundation of right. It is too narrow in its *objects*, — *doing good to mankind*, — whereas it should be to do good to all sentient beings as we have opportunity.

The definition is too limited in its *motives*, — "*for the sake of* [*one's own*] *everlasting happiness*," — whereas the motives, subjective and objective, should be for the sake of all the good results which we can produce by holy action in pleasing and glorifying God, and in all the happiness which we can promote for ourselves and others in time and in eternity.

That the proper tendency of moral acts belongs to their nature, in the opinion of President Edwards, according to the judgment of his son, Dr. Edwards, we have already seen (q. 121, § 4). And now the reader's attention is invited to the very explicit and convincing statements which the son has made of his own views.

"The true ground of accountableness and of praise and blame, is . . . the nature, moral aspect, and *tendency* of [our] volitions, and of the actions which flow from them."

"The true ground of [reward and punishment] seems to be this, that a rational, voluntary action [*tends* to good or to evil. When a man, in the exercise of his reason, voluntarily and designedly performs an action which [*tends* in its nature to the general good, or to good on the whole, with a design to do good, he is rewardable. And, on the other hand, when in the exercise of his reason, he voluntarily performs an action which [*tends*, and which he knows, or might know tends to the general detriment, or to evil on the whole, he is punishable." — Vol. ii. p. 358.

"The *worth* of virtue . . . consists in its *usefulness* to the public interest; and the hatefulness of vice, in its being detrimental to the general good and happiness." — p. 462.

"I will now propose what I believe to be the true foundation of moral obligation, or of obligation to virtue. It is the [*tendency* of virtue to happiness, — happiness on the large scale, or happiness to the intellectual system, and the happiness of every individual being whose happiness is not inconsistent with that of the system. Thus I am obligated to love my fellow men, because that love [*tends* to their happiness, and to the happiness of the intellectual system." — p. 541.

"It has been the opinion of the wisest men, in all ages, that this principle of regard to our good upon the whole, in a man duly enlightened, leads to the practice of every virtue." We have already quoted a similar opinion from Bishop Butler.

"We ought to prefer a greater good, though a more distant, to a less; and a less evil to a greater."

"We have observed before, that ancient moralists, and many among the moderns, have deduced the whole of morals from this principle, and that when we make

a right estimate of goods and evils according to their degree, their dignity, their duration, and according as they are more or less in our power, it leads to the practice of every virtue."

This principle "has this peculiar advantage, that its force is felt by the most ignorant, and even the most abandoned."

"If a man can be induced to do his duty from a regard to his own happiness, he will soon find reason to love virtue for its own sake."

"In the present state of human nature these [motives] are not useless to the best, and they are the only means left of reclaiming the abandoned." *

"*Choose that which is most useful, and custom will make it most agreeable.*" A beautiful saying of some author.

135. Again: Is it conceivable that all productiveness of happiness should be separated from the nature of benevolence?

Wherever perfect benevolence is, there is productiveness of higher, greater, more excellent and valuable happiness, than that which any thing else in its place would or could produce. And wherever the most desirable happiness exists, which can be produced by internal, voluntary action, it is the production of benevolence. Neither of these phenomena (in the sense above expressed), exists apart from the other. Perfect benevolence and productiveness of highest happiness go together. Therefore tendency to, and productiveness of, happiness belongs to the nature of benevolence.

Should the objector still ask, —

* Reid's Works, vol. iii. pp. 141, 240, 241. See the Appendix, Note E, for a further discussion of the points considered in this chapter.

136. May there not be intelligent, voluntary acts which tend to produce highest happiness, but which are not holy?

We answer: There can be no such acts as tend to produce highest happiness, unless they are *designed* to promote highest happiness, and if they are so designed, they are holy; e. g. Suppose a surgeon, in the exercise of perfect benevolence, amputates a limb to save life. Or, suppose Jenny Lind exercised perfect benevolence when she sung My Redeemer Liveth. In these performances, a great number of executive volitions are employed. And these executive volitions evidently tend to the highest happiness in the power of those agents. Their designs cannot be executed without them. No other acts can be substituted for them which will tend to produce an equal amount of happiness. They are dictated by the highest intelligence of which the agents are capable. Those executive acts are put forth in the fulfilment of the best designs which the agents can form. They, therefore, produce more happiness than if they were performed from any other design. Holy beings who know of these acts, God, angels, and men, are pleased, and they approve. They for whose benefit these acts are performed, are made more happy than they could be by any other acts which the same agents could substitute for them. The agents themselves are made more happy by these acts than they could be by any other acts which could have been substituted for them. Their reason fully approves of these acts, and their consciences are satisfied in the highest possible degree by all they have done in the premises. They have that peculiar satisfaction and joy which nothing but an approving conscience can give. Suppose these same executive acts to have been

performed by these agents, but from a selfish instead of a benevolent design. In this case they most evidently could not tend to the same degree of happiness, as when performed from a benevolent purpose. They could not produce a just approval, nor the consequent feeling.

Now, one thing (and that a most essential thing) is wanting to justify an affirmative answer to the question under consideration, and that is, to show that such executive acts, performed in fulfilment of a benevolent design, are not in any sense holy.

We believe that the common sense of mankind is not competent to perceive, that such executive acts do not derive a holy character from the benevolent intention which they are designed to fulfil.

"Happiness is the result of holiness, . . . [and] highest happiness is the consequent of holiness only."* This is said by an able writer. From it the inference seems inevitable, that acts not holy do not tend to produce highest happiness. Therefore, we conclude there cannot be intelligent, voluntary acts, which tend to produce *highest* happiness, and which are not in some proper sense holy.

It has been said that all language is formed on the idea that virtue is not founded on *any* tendency to produce highest amount of happiness. If (as has been proved) virtue is founded both in the nature and tendency of an intelligent aim (the tendency of an act being an element of its nature) to produce highest happiness, then the presumption is very strong that language is not formed on the opposite idea. In proof that no language is formed on this idea, see in the sequel, q. 198 and onward.

* Bib. Sac. 1853, p. 732.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED. — DUTY MEASURED BY ABILITY.

137. WHY must the virtuous production of happiness be *intentional?*

(1.) It has before been proved (see q. 62) that all moral acts must be voluntary, and for this reason no involuntary acts can be virtuous.

(2.) The promotion of happiness must be voluntary and intentional, or it will not and cannot be moral goodness. By this is meant not *merely* that the act by which the happiness is produced must be voluntary, but that the happiness produced must be intended in the act which produces it. If the production of happiness were not intentional, it would be mere natural or incidental goodness, — mere usefulness. Unintended usefulness would no more be moral goodness than the goodness of an ox or a horse, or than the utility of money, or of any other useful object in nature, is moral goodness. A voluntary act, although it may be the accidental occasion, in some of its relations, of happiness which was not designed and which constituted no part of its object, is no more virtuous than it would be if it were not, in any of its relations, the occasion of happiness. Suppose a man thrusts a dagger into another man's side, intending to murder him, and thus opens an abscess and saves his life, he is none the less guilty of murder than he would have been if he had severed an artery and caused his victim's death, instead

of saving his life and producing undesigned happiness.

Again: For illustration, suppose you intend to shoot a man, but by accident shoot a tiger just ready to devour him, and thus save the man's life, which you intended to destroy. Your wicked act is thus the unintended, accidental occasion of a good result, but it is none the less wicked on account of the happiness produced, because no such result was intended.

Mere voluntary, unintended, accidental production of happiness, especially if it could not be foreseen, however great it may be, and however voluntary the act may be by which it is produced, is not virtue. *Mere* useful *tendency* is not virtue. Mere *usefulness* is not virtue. If it were, not only the ox would be virtuous, but the food which he eats, and the cart and plow which he draws, would be virtuous, and the sun would be more virtuous still.

If *mere* utility were virtue, then whatever is useful would be virtuous, but many more things are useful than are virtuous.

It has been truly said, that "the love of the general happiness . . . does not derive its goodness [*merely* from its being the means of the general happiness." Notwithstanding this, it may be true, as we claim to have proved, that this "love" does derive its goodness from its being the intentional production of happiness — not *merely* from being the means of general happiness, but from being the *intentional* means of that happiness. In the language of Dr. Hopkins, President of Williams College, "Goodness is the intentional production of happiness." — Essays and Discourses, p. 35.

"There is no ultimate good but happiness." "The excellence of virtue consists wholly in this: that it is the cause of good; i. e. of happiness, the ultimate

good, the only good for which virtue is valuable. Its excellence consists in this, that it is the [*voluntary* cause of happiness." — Dwight's Theology; on the Nature of Virtue.

"Duty and right are brothers. Their common mother is [*liberty.*" "What makes the good and evil of an action is not the action itself, but the [*intention* that has determined it." — Cousin on The True, Beautiful, and Good, pp. 237, 244.

"I only wish to establish that happiness is one thing and virtue another, that man necessarily aspires after happiness, but that he is only obligated to virtue." — Ibid. p. 243. "Virtue I know lies in the intent." — Seneca.

"We regard the will as the seat of all virtue and vice." "There can be neither virtue nor vice where there is no exercise of the will." — Prof. James M'Cosh on Divine Government, pp. 299, 300.

138. What is meant when it is said that benevolence should be supreme, impartial, and universal?

By supreme benevolence is meant, that benevolence which regards the greatest general good more than any other and less good, especially if the less good be opposed to, and inconsistent with, the greater general good. Supreme benevolence regards the supreme good as such; it is a supreme regard to the supreme good. (Comp. q. 118.)

Impartial benevolence is a due, proper, and proportionate regard to the happiness, interests, and rights of all individuals, according to the best practicable estimation of their worth and real value. Impartial benevolence forbids the sacrifice of the greater good to the less.

Love must be impartial in order to be benevolent, and to be impartial it must be a preference of the

greater good of the whole to the less good of any part, however small or however large that part may be.

Benevolence to different beings to be impartial, must be according to our best judgment and knowledge of, and a due and proportionate regard to, the different kinds and degrees of happiness which different beings are capable of enjoying, and to their different faculties for *promoting* happiness. A moral being, who regards and loves the different objects of love as best he can, according to their real value, exercises impartial benevolence, and of course he will love the greatest good more than, and choose to promote it rather than, any less and inferior good.

The different objects which should be thus regarded, comprise the different *kinds*, degrees, means, and causes of happiness, and the different capacities and powers for enjoying and communicating happiness, which belong to different beings, occupying different ranks in the scale of existence.

On this scale an ox or a horse occupies a rank superior to that of an insect or a reptile. A man is superior to a brute, one man may be superior to another, an angel is superior to a man, and God is infinitely superior to all created beings. And therefore impartial benevolence would be, as far as is wisely practicable, a proportionate regard to the real value of the happiness, and to the capacities of different beings.

As impartial benevolence would lead us to prefer the greater to the less good, and, of course, the good of the whole to the good of a part, it would lead us also to prefer those ways and means and opportunities of promoting happiness, in which we could do it to the best advantage and in the highest degree. As a general rule, every man can take care of his own welfare

and interests to better advantage than he can the interests of any other person. So it is in regard to the happiness of his own family, neighborhood, and country.

Impartial is opposed to selfish. Preferring the interests and welfare of a part to the general good, whether that part include more than self or not, is partiality and selfishness. Impartial benevolence would lead a man to regard the interests of others according to their value as equal to his own, and to place his happiness in the promotion of the general good.

By universal benevolence is meant an impartial regard for the good of *all*. Benevolence to be impartial must be universal, and to be universal it must be impartial.

139. What should be meant by *disinterested* benevolence?

*Dis*interested is very liable to be understood as meaning, but should not be designed to mean, *un*interested. That it is so liable to be taken in that sense, is some objection to its use. The term, if used, should mean, and clearly mean, not selfishly, not partially interested. Disinterested benevolence, properly speaking, differs in nothing from impartial benevolence.

When we say that love, to be holy, must be voluntary, supreme, impartial, and universal, we really can add nothing, but rather detract, by saying it must be disinterested.

140. *Why* must a virtuous intention to promote the general happiness be supreme, impartial, and universal?

It is necessary that love, to be benevolent, should be supreme, impartial, and universal, because the good of the whole universe of beings is greater, more desirable,

more valuable, and ought, therefore, more to be sought than the good of any part of it. Universal good is worth more than partial good. The greater and higher good is worth more than any less and lower good. To sacrifice the greater for the less is most evidently wrong, but for no other reason than because it is less. To set up and seek the good of any individual, or of any part, instead of, or in opposition to, the good of the whole, is to sacrifice the greater general to the less and partial good. And further: to seek the good of a part, in opposition to the general good, is not only to obstruct and hinder the general good, but it is inconsistent with, in opposition to, and destructive of, the greatest good of that part whose good is thus unwisely sought. If a man, in his selfishness, sets up his own happiness as a greater good than the general welfare, and seeks it accordingly, he not only opposes the general well-being, but he sacrifices his own highest happiness, for all coming time, for some partial, temporal gratification which, in his selfish folly, he may obtain.

Therefore, if the intention to *promote* happiness be not impartial and universal benevolence, it cannot be fulfilled. The partial, selfish intention subverts its own end. The inevitable tendency of its nature is such, that, instead of promoting and increasing happiness, it not only brings evil to the public, but it brings suffering to the agent.

And therefore, strictly speaking, a partial intention is not to promote the general good, nor even to the *highest* good of the individual or part whose good is sought, but generally, if not universally, some lower, present, or earthly good, at the expense of the highest temporal and eternal good, both of the individual or part, and of the whole.

141. Why must the virtuous intention or choice be to promote the sum total of general happiness?

The intention or choice, in order to be virtuous, must be not merely to produce some happiness especially at the expense of more, as in the case of selfishness and sin, but to promote, to increase the sum of the general happiness; because, unless this be the intention, no *gain* is intended. And if the object of the choice were to be accomplished, no good, on the whole, would be done. Nothing would be *gained.*

In some parts of this treatise, the author has found difficulty in expressing what he conceives to be the exact truth, without implying more than is true. Although, in some instances, his language may possibly seem to imply that there can be no true virtue in a man's character when that character is not perfect in holiness or entirely free from sin, or that one can perform no part of his duty without performing the whole, yet he has not designed to convey this sentiment. He fully believes that the Christian character, as (to say the least) it has generally been exhibited, has not been entirely free from sin, but far from being so, and of course that it has not been perfect in holiness, as it ought to be.

142. Why, to be benevolent, must the generic or supreme purpose of a moral agent be, according to his best knowledge, to promote the total sum of the most excellent good and happiness, to the greatest extent in his power? Or why, to be benevolent, must a moral agent's purpose be to do all the good he can?

It is necessary and essential to the benevolent quality of the *chief purpose* of a moral agent, that it should be to do all the good he can, —

(1.) Because the most excellent good is more valua-

ble, and more to be desired than a less good is; and because the greatest sum of good is more to be desired than a less sum is. The same reasons and obligations, in kind, which require the production of any good, require the promotion of the greatest possible extent of good. The same principle of action that would lead a man to promote the general happiness, or to do good to any extent, would lead him, if consistent, to do good, or promote happiness, to the greatest extent known by him to be possible.

(2.) If moral obligation requires the promotion of the greater amount or degree of happiness, rather than a less, because the greater is more valuable than the less, and if it be essential to the virtuousness or benevolence of a choice that it be a choice or purpose of the greater good, rather than that which is known to be the less (as evidently this must be conceded), then it is essential to the virtuousness of the chief and predominant purpose of a moral agent that it should be an aim to promote the greatest extent of good. If there be a mental reservation to commit some sin, now and then, as it may happen to be convenient for selfish purposes, there cannot be a spirit of true submission and obedience to the will of God.

Unless the law of right be taken as the rule of duty without reserve, there is not the beginning of the spirit of holy obedience to it. If an intention to disobey in one point be reserved, so that only partial obedience is intended, the whole purpose is vitiated. Not being a purpose of the highest good, it is wanting in an essential element of virtue.

(3.) If the *promotion* of the absolute good, as such, be the object, then, by nothing short of a design to produce the greatest amount of that good can that object

be *promoted*, because to design less good than the greatest known to be in our power, would be to choose the less instead of the greater known good, which is sin. The same law which requires any good to be done, requires the greatest amount of good to be done which is possible to the agent. And therefore if the greatest amount of good, known by the agent to be possible to him, be not designed, there is no design to obey the law, and therefore the law is in no degree obeyed. Therefore, again, if the generic, or supreme purpose be not to promote the greatest known good in one's power, it is not true benevolence. It does not begin to partake of the benevolent or virtuous quality. It is not in its nature adapted, because it is not designed to promote the highest good of all, and therefore it is not adapted to promote the highest good of the individual.

If the predominant purpose be all in strength and ardor, which the law requires it to be, and if it be to promote the greatest sum of the most excellent good, then it will be adapted in the tendency of its nature to secure the highest good of the individual agent as well as that of all others.

143. What is that holiness which is essential to the Christian character?

It may be proper and useful here to remark, —

The purpose of the Christian to serve God has commonly been wanting in that strength and ardor which is essential to its permanent and full control of the specific or particular acts of his life. And yet it appears evident from the preceding discussion, that the Christian's sincere and honest purpose must be to do the will of God in all things, i. e. to do all the good he can. If, like Naaman, the Assyrian general, he reserves the intention to practice known sin, saying, "The Lord

pardon thy servant in this thing" (2 Kings, 5: 18), all pretension to a purpose to serve God is in vain.

It is a most sublime and glorious truth, that a moral being is never under moral obligation to renounce, forego, or sacrifice his own highest happiness. That which produces the highest happiness of the individual, tends also to the highest happiness of the universe, which is in the individual's power to promote; and that which produces the highest universal happiness, also produces the most excellent happiness for the individual, for each and all the parts. That which is promotive of one is promotive of the other. Production of happiness and tendency to produce it, so belong to the intrinsic nature of holiness, that the highest possible holiness of each and all moral beings in the universe, would produce the highest possible happiness of the whole universe, and of every individual in it; and nothing else can do this. "Happiness is the result of holiness, . . [and] the highest happiness is the consequent of holiness only." That which prevents the highest general happiness, will eventually prevent the highest happiness of each individual, and that which prevents the highest happiness of any intelligent being, does now, and will forever, to some extent, prevent the highest happiness of the universe as a whole.

144. Why is the *best use* which we can make of all our powers, required in virtuous action?

We are required to make the best use of all our powers, because the best use which we can make of them is necessary, in order that the most excellent good, well-being, or happiness, which is in our power, may be accomplished.

145. Why is our duty measured by our ability, so that one can neither fall short of, nor exceed the other?

(1.) Sound reason, — the conscience and common sense of mankind demand that our duty should be measured by our ability, so that it cannot exceed nor fall short of our ability to perform it, when we make the best use that we can of all our powers, because (according to q. 109) ability is the foundation of obligation.

(2.) Power to know our duty is as essential to its existence as power to perform it, because power to know it is essential to the power of performing it. If we choose, or design to do the greatest good within our knowledge, which we have the power to do, so far as we carry out such designs, our acts are virtuous.

(3.) Reason demands that obligation and ability should be commensurate, because if our obligations should transcend the best use which we can make of all our powers, there never could any possible good come from its being so, for such obligations never could be fulfilled. Such obligations never were and never will be complied with.

This supposition, that duty exceeds ability, would confound all moral distinctions, and render it impossible to form any consistent ideas of right or wrong, of moral character, or of duty.

Right intentions are phenomena of the will, to which a moral agent is required to give existence. If he has not the *power* to will right, he is required to give existence to results for which there is no possible cause — to exercise power which does not exist, to give existence to an action which is to be an action of nothing — a phenomenon without a subject; all which being as absurd to suppose as that literal *effects* should be produced without a cause, which is impossible, even to Omnipotence.

(4.) Virtue, consisting in the fulfilment of such obligations, never did exist, and never will, until all distinction between truth and error shall cease. Holiness is compliance with obligation. If obligation could exceed ability in any instance, holiness in all such cases would consist in doing impossibilities, and, of course, would never, in such cases, exist; and then sin would consist in *not* doing impossibilities; and then, too, sin would be the universal and inevitable consequence of all such obligations whenever they should exist. Therefore, obligations which we do not and cannot know, or knowing, cannot comply with, cannot be binding upon us, and of course cannot to us exist. (See note F.)

146. Does it require more calculation to perceive what actions are useful, than to perceive what actions are benevolent?

It has often been urged as an objection of great weight, against the doctrine of *benevolent utility*, that it requires so much calculation to know what is useful, as to make it impracticable in that way to know what duty is. (Comp. qs. 5, 125.)

It has been maintained by some moral philosophers, that before we can know what intentions are useful, long calculations are necessary, whereas they say we decide instinctively and instantaneously that benevolent intention is right.

(1.) It seems to us that we and all the world in mature life know, that an intention is useful, just as soon as we know that it is benevolent. We never can know that an intention is benevolent, until we know that it is an intention to promote utility, or to be useful, on the largest scale in one's power. To know one of these things is to know the other, for they are both

precisely one and the same thing. It is prerequisite to our forming a benevolent intention, that we decide the accomplishment of some object to be useful. And then it appears that we must perceive the accomplishment of an object to be useful, before we can form a benevolent intention to accomplish that object. If this be not so, then knowledge of duty is not prerequisite to the performance of duty, and then it is not essential to sin that it be transgression of known law. Which is absurd.

To know what actions are benevolent is to know what actions are designed to be useful, because benevolence is itself a design to be useful, and is, therefore, the design of utility. The idea of usefulness is a fundamental element in the idea of holiness. If obligations, which cannot be known, cannot exist to him who cannot know them, then we cannot be under obligation to perform certain actions, any further than we can know, what actions are adapted to do good, and to be useful. One who does not and cannot know that an intention to do good is adapted to do good, and to promote happiness, cannot perceive any obligation for him to form such an intention; for to him there can be no such obligation. He who does not and cannot know this, does not know moral good from moral evil, and of course he does not know what moral obligation is; and until he does, he cannot be under obligation to any duty. Thus it appears, that one who does not know, and cannot perceive that an *intention* to do good is adapted, by the *tendency* of its nature, to do good or to promote happiness, does not know what benevolence is, and, therefore, cannot know an act to be benevolent, nor decide it to be right and holy. No more calculation, therefore, is necessary to know what is morally useful, than is

necessary to know what actions are benevolent, or to know what benevolence is, or than is necessary to know what actions are right. To know one of these things is to know the others also.

(2.) Men accomplish various objects by their intentions. They promote happiness by their intentions to promote it. And they know as well, that benevolent intentions are adapted and tend to promote happiness, as they know that any intentions are adapted and tend to promote their objects. And they have better reason to know this, because holiness more uniformly promotes happiness, than other designs secure their objects.

147. How is an act perceived to be benevolent?

Whatever manifests an intention to be that of promoting highest happiness, is the evidence of its benevolence. Whatever indicates an intentional tendency in any act to promote highest happiness, shows that act to be benevolent. So that the benevolence of an intention cannot be perceived, without perceiving that it is an intention of utility. Men regard an intention to do good as doing good, because that is the way and the only way in which that which is morally good is done or can be done.

It is believed, that the universal reason of mankind is not only competent to perceive, but does perceive, *that tendency* to do good, which belongs to the nature of an intention to do good, as plainly as they see the tendency of any other intention to accomplish its object. And therefore it is, that we decide so readily that benevolence is right. Hence we come again to the conclusion, that no more calculation is necessary to determine the utility of a benevolent action, than is necessary to determine the benevolence of any specified voluntary act.

148. Why must benevolent love imply and include a purpose to promote highest holiness, as well as highest happiness?

(1.) Intelligent choice of any thing implies a choice of the means known to be necessary for the attainment of that thing. Holiness is the necessary means of the highest universal well-being. A purpose to promote the highest happiness, must, therefore, include the purpose to promote, to the greatest extent, the necessary means of the highest happiness, or which is the same thing, to promote holiness to the greatest extent.

(2.) No man can intelligently intend to promote happiness to the extent of his ability, without, at the same time, intending to promote the means known to be necessary for the promotion of the highest happiness in his power. If I intend to promote happiness to the extent of my ability, to act consistently, I must employ the best means of happiness within my knowledge, and I must also promote to the extent of my ability the employment of those means by others, so that I cannot promote happiness to the extent of my ability, without promoting the highest amount of holiness in my power.

Since holiness is promotion of highest happiness, it follows also that no man can intelligently intend to promote holiness, without intending to promote highest happiness.

Happiness is the ultimate object of all voluntary action. It is and must be, therefore, the ultimate object of all holy action, even when that holy action is immediately directed to the promotion of holiness.

CHAPTER XII.

HOLINESS, THAT ACT OF THE WILL WHICH WOULD SECURE THE HARMONIOUS OPERATION OF ALL THE MENTAL POWERS.

149. How can it be shown that perfect holiness is that exercise of the will, which would secure the harmonious coöperation of all the mental powers?

All the mental powers are included in the Intellect, Sensibility, and Will. The answer to this question occupies most of this chapter.

150. What is the office of the intellect? (See q. 40.)

In the moral economy of our constitution there is the power of thought and knowledge, to think and know, designated by the terms intellect, understanding, and reason.

Reason is the mind's eye to discover truth and duty, — the truth-discerning faculty. Its proper office is to think, to investigate truth, to consider and decide upon the proper objects of pursuit, to ascertain and point out the wisest, most effectual, and enduring means and modes of securing individual and general well-being, and to perceive what acts of the will are best adapted to produce individual and universal happiness, and in this way to ascertain the laws of moral action, and to demand of the will obedience to those laws. Therefore, in this subordinate sense, the understanding or reason may be considered as a lawgiver to the will, — the viceroy or vicegerent of God in the soul of man. In this office, the Reason is to demand that action of

the *will* which, in the end, will best satisfy the sensibility and promote the happiness of the soul. In this office of the reason, it is the conscience. The office of conscience, in perceiving duty and in demanding its performance, is intellectual, which may be regarded as its first office. In this office of conscience, it is the reason applied to moral subjects, deciding what is right and duty, and demanding its performance.

The first office of conscience is fulfilled in forming the decisions of reason as to what are proper objects of pursuit, and as to what is right and duty, as well as to what is wrong; and then, with authority to demand of the will a prompt, steady, and cheerful obedience, and also to reveal, to some extent, the rewards of obedience and the punishment of disobedience.

151. What is the office of the sensibility? (q. 41.)

As it is the office of the intellect to think, so it is the office of the sensibility to *feel*. It feels pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, happiness and misery, sensations, emotions, and passions of various kinds. The mind, in exercising its sensibility, desires happiness and dreads misery. Dread of misery implies a desire to shun it.

The desires of the sensibility include all possible, subjective, internal motives to voluntary action, whether good or bad, right or wrong. Without a sensibility, as we have before seen (q. 34), there could be no motive, neither objective nor subjective, and, of course, without a sensibility, there could be neither right action nor wrong, for the reason that there could be no voluntary action at all. The primary motive power of the soul, and all its springs of action, lie, therefore, in the sensibility.

In this sense, the sensibility is the prime mover of the soul, and its office is to supply the soul with all its subjective motives for duty, in its desires for happiness

and dread of misery, and for the promotion of happiness in others; and, of course, by an absolute necessity in the nature of the soul, the sensibility supplies motives and temptations to commit sin. This it does in its blind desires for pleasures (for all its desires are blind), — pleasures which are inconsistent with the highest happiness and best good of the soul. Here let it be remembered that motives to choose cannot have an irresistible power to produce a given choice. This would be inconsistent with the nature of choice. It is not the office of the sensibility to govern, but only to *offer* motives.

It is not the office of the sensibility to see and judge and know, but only to feel. Its desires, therefore, *must* be blind. One of its functions is to supply *all* the subjective motives for choice, — not to judge nor to choose between them. To judge and choose belong to the Reason and Will. Now, if all possible internal motives for choice are found in the desires of the sensibility, it must of necessity furnish motives for wrong choice, as well as right, for where there are no opposing motives, there can be no choice between them, right or wrong. It belongs to the office of the sensibility, also, to receive, treasure up, and retain the rewards of obedience, and the penalties of disobedience, to the laws of the reason and to the authority of conscience.

These rewards and penalties and disciplinary chastisements consist in the happy or unhappy states of the sensibility, secured by, or resulting from, the action of the will. The sensibility is the seat both of the soul's well-being or happiness, and of its misery. The exercises and feelings of the sensibility, in view of right and wrong moral action, are the operations of conscience in the sentient office of conscience.

Conscience has two offices. In its intellectual office, as we have seen, it is the reason applying itself to moral subjects, distinguishing between right and wrong, perceiving duty and with authority demanding its performance, pointing out the good to be promoted by duty, and the good to be lost, and the misery to be produced by sin, and, in this sense, giving laws to the will. In its sentient office, conscience is the sensibility experiencing the various feelings which arise in the mind from the fulfilment or violation of obligations, — the complacent feelings which arise from the approval of one's own reason, and from the approbation of all, both the good and bad, but especially of all the holy of God's creation and of God himself; experiencing, also, the opposite feelings of shame, remorse, and *self*-condemnation, and those feelings of shame and remorse which arise from the condemnation of *all* rational, created beings, and from the condemnation of the all-wise Creator.

Thus it appears that conscience, in its complex, intellectual, and sentient office, is God's vicegerent in the soul, and, in this subordinate sense, is a lawgiver, judge, and the executive officer to the soul, both to reward and punish, and to receive rewards and punishments.

152. What is the office of the will? (Refer to q. 4, § 2.)

The office of the will is to choose between the motives found in the desires of the sensibility, — to choose which desires *shall* be, and which shall *not* be, gratified. The will is the right arm of the soul's power to do good or evil. Its proper office and duty is to be in subjection and to obey the laws of the reason, — to execute the biddings of Conscience. The will is the *power*

of the soul to obey or disobey the demands of reason and conscience. It is the power which, tempted by the desires of the sensibility for the pleasures which conscience forbids, can raise a mutiny in the soul and rebel against the authority of conscience.

Will is that power which can keep order in the soul by obeying the purest dictates which reason can give for the time being, and then by holding the attention to careful and earnest inquiries after truth and duty, for the purpose of conforming thereto. It can *preserve* that order, and make further progress in knowledge and holiness.

> "I will place within them as a guide
> My umpire Conscience, whom if they will hear,
> Light after light well us'd they shall attain,
> And to the end persisting, safe arrive."
>
> *Milton, Paradise Lost*, book 3, 194.

The will can and ought to be a dutiful subject, obedient to the reason and conscience; but it can be a rebel against conscience, and, aided by the feelings and desires of the sensibility, it can, to some extent, blind the eye of reason, and then bribe it, and by continuance in sin, sear and harden the conscience; and thus, at length, carry off the whole soul, with all its powers, into the most determined rebellion against truth and right. The will *can rebel*, and then, to some extent, control the reason and conscience; but its *duty* and proper office is to *obey* them, and by obeying, to aid them in the proper discharge of their appropriate functions.

When the will freely exercises itself in the full discharge of its appropriate duties, then reason and conscience will fully perform their functions, and point out

the path of wisdom and duty, and make it plain; the sensibility will be filled with peace and joy; and thus all the faculties of the soul would be united in accomplishing the great end of being.

153. From what has been said upon the office of the intellect and sensibility, what is the nature and office of conscience?

From what has been advanced concerning the intellect and sensibility, it appears that conscience is a complex faculty, having the complex office of perceiving and laying down, with a rightful authority, the rules and demands of duty, and of feeling the motives which prompt to a compliance with those rules and demands.

If conscience is the faculty that perceives duty, it must, of course, be supreme among the human faculties. Great credit was ascribed to Bishop Butler for discovering the supremacy of conscience. That conscience is supreme is only the self-evident truth, that the demands of duty ought to be obeyed. (See next q. §§ 6, 7, 8.)

154. To recapitulate: What is the substance of what has been said as to the harmonious coöperation of the powers of the human soul?

Of that which has been said of the harmonious operation of all the mental powers, this is the sum.

(1.) The soul of man has three faculties, *reason* and *conscience* being supreme among the faculties, are to act as the vicegerent of God in the soul, and under God, the law-giver, to sanction and sustain his laws in their supreme authority over the *will*, while the *will* is the power to obey or disobey, and to fill the *sensibility* with a fulness of joy or of woe. Reason is the power of thought, the mind's eye to perceive truth and dis-

cover duty, and with authority to demand of the will its cheerful performance.

(2.) The sensibility is, in its own nature, the prime mover of the soul, containing within itself all the original motives or springs of all voluntary action, both right and wrong, prompting the will to choose the right, and while on probation by the necessity of its own nature tempting to sin, and when the will obeys the voice of reason and conscience, which is the voice of God, then the sensibility receives and retains for the soul a fulness of joy. And then there is a perfect harmony reigning throughout all the faculties of the mind.

The demands of reason and conscience are satisfied. Conscience, the vicegerent of God, smiles approbation while its authority is obeyed.

(3.) The will obeys the reason, and thus fulfils its own proper office with the highest conceivable honor, equity, and right.

And through the sensibility a flood of joy sweeps over the soul. Each of the faculties is exercised in coöperation and perfect harmony with all the others.

(4.) That unoriginated principle and law of right, which is the obligatory rule and law of all duty and righteous action, is the moral constitution of the universe. (Refer to q. 8.)

Under this constitution all the laws of God contained in his written revelation were enacted.

This unoriginated principle, united with the laws of the written revelation, forms the moral constitution, in accordance with which human reason in its legitimate exercise, properly enlightened, will always agree.

(5.) The reason of man is not an emperor, with unlimited power of arbitrary legislation. It is a lawgiver

in a subordinate sense, with only limited powers, bound by the necessity of its own nature to act under and in accordance with the *unoriginated* principle of right, which is developed in the works of nature, in itself, and in the precepts and laws of divine revelation.

For illustration: The people of a state or nation adopt a civil constitution as their fundamental law. Then they choose a legislature to make specific, particular laws under the authority granted by the constitution. Of course, the legislature must be guided by the constitution in all the laws which it enacts, so as never to make a law which the constitution does not authorize, much less a law that contravenes it.

(6.) The fundamental, moral constitution, under the authority of which reason, as a legislator, enlightened and guided by divine revelation, in all its legitimate doings proceeds, is that eternal, unoriginated, unchangeable principle of honor, equity, and right, viz. That every moral being ought to *promote* as much general happiness as is in his power.

The office of reason, guided by revelation, is to perceive, understand, and apply this eternal principle of right, to the moral actions of our lives, — to define specific laws, and to show their application to particular cases of duty.

Conscience, in one of its offices, is but another name for reason, when reason is employed in perceiving, deciding, and approving what is right, and in disapproving what is wrong.

(7.) Conscience performs this office according to the light it has, by necessity and not by choice. When properly enlightened, and not perverted by education or habit, and not bribed by the desires and passions of the sensibility, nor by the will, it always decides right. By

necessity conscience decides, and by necessity it executes, and not by *will* and *choice*.

"What, then, is the nature and office of conscience? Her nature . . . is intellectual and not cordial. She resides in the head and not in the heart. As to her office, it is manifold; for she is director, inspector, reprover, approver, informant, witness, advocate, and judge, as the nature of the conduct requires; she sometimes divests herself of the office of judge, and commences the most intolerable tormentor to the soul." — Dr. Samuel Spring on Duty, p. 145.

(8.) In its complex office it is a complex faculty, consisting of reason and sensibility, and as such is, *in part*, judge of right and wrong and executioner, God's vicegerent in the soul, to adjudicate some of the awards of righteousness, and to execute some of its judgments, in rewards and penalties, in the pleasures of approbation, which right acts of will produce in the sensibility, and in the feelings of self-condemnation, shame, and remorse, which are the fruits of sin.

Thus we see that in the organization which God has given us as moral beings, we have reason and conscience with the rightful authority to govern the action of the will, and to determine the objects of its pursuit, — a sensibility to supply us with the needful subjective motives, without which it would be impossible for the will to act at all, but with which the will has power to act, so as to fulfil the claims of reason and conscience, and to satisfy the highest aspirations of the sensibility after happiness.

155. In what does the harmonious operation of the mental powers consist?

Now we may see what would be the harmonious operation of these, our mental powers. Let each of

the powers and capacities of mind fulfil its *own proper* office, and there will be a most glorious, harmonious, and righteous coöperation between them all.

In the first place, reason will discover by intuition, what is right, to some extent, without the aid or choice of the will. And when reason has obtained some knowledge of duty, the will obeys the demands of conscience, follows the light which reason supplies, resists the motives which tempt to the commission of sin, listens to the voice of reason, and chooses those objects which reason decides will, in the best manner, and in the highest degree, *gratify* and *satisfy* the desires of the sensibility, obtain peace of conscience, and the approbation of God, and of all the rational beings in the universe besides. The sure way to obtain more light and knowledge of duty, is to obey what we have.

In the second place, while obeying present light, the will holds the attention of the understanding to the most careful and skilful inquiries which it can make, after more knowledge of truth and duty. And now, as reason shall discover more and more what will best subserve the highest interests of the soul, and best accomplish the true end of its being, and as conscience puts in her claims that the discoveries and decisions of the reason must be obeyed, if now the will fulfils its high and noble office according to its highest honor and dignity, and executes the high behests of reason, conscience, and duty, then, —

In the third place, the sensibilities will be filled with a joy that passeth knowledge, and the peace of the soul will be like a river, and its righteousness like the waves of the sea.

Holiness, when complete, is thus seen to be that exercise of the will which would secure the harmonious

coöperation of all the faculties of the soul, while nothing else but the right exercise of the will can do this. This harmony of the soul includes the end for which the soul was made. This, and this alone, fulfils the will, — the chief end and aim of God in its creation.

In this harmonious coöperation of all the faculties of the mind, reason and conscience fulfil their proper functions, and their demands are all satisfied. The will, with the highest dignity and honor, has done its duty, the best desires of the sensibility are fulfilled and satisfied with an eternal fullness of joy and peace. Thus it is seen that holiness is that exercise of the will which would secure the harmonious operations of all the mental powers.

N. B. That principle of action intelligently and voluntarily obeyed, — that exercise of the will which would secure the harmonious coöperation of all the faculties of *one soul*, would also secure the harmonious coöperation of *all the powers* of *all* the moral beings in the universe, — God, angels, and men, would then consent to unite in love to the greatest happiness of being in general. Then there would be no sin to lament and none to *punish*, and no punishment to be endured. And then there would be no *hell*, and no lost sinners to suffer the pains of hell, nor to send up the smoke of their torment before a universe of beholders forever and ever. And then there would be nothing that could be prevented by wisdom and holiness, to impair, in the least degree, the happiness of the whole universe. All tears would be forever wiped away. Heaven would then be as boundless as God's dominions, and as perfect, as holy, and as happy as God, with the coöperation of all intelligent beings, could make it. Oh what a heaven that would be! bounded only by the circle of

creation, and in which the highest possible blessedness would forever reign.

In confirmation of this, notice carefully what President Edwards has said: "Virtue . . . consists in the cordial consent or union of being to being in general. And . . . that frame of mind, whereby it is disposed to relish and be pleased with the view of this, is benevolence or union of heart itself to being in general, or universally a benevolent frame of mind; because he whose temper is to love being in general, therein must have a disposition to approve and be pleased with [*love* to being in general."

"There is no other temper [or moral character] but this that a man can have, and agree with himself, or be without self-inconsistence, that is, without having some inclinations and relishes [and choices] repugnant to others; and that for these reasons. Every being that has understanding and will, necessarily loves happiness. For, to suppose any being not to love happiness, would be to suppose he did not love what was agreeable to him; which is a contradiction, or at least would imply, that nothing was agreeable or eligible to him, which is the same as to say that he has no such thing as choice, or any [*faculty* of will. So that every being who has a faculty of will, [*must of necessity have an inclination to happiness.* And therefore, if he be consistent with himself, and has not some inclinations repugnant to others, he must approve of those inclinations whereby beings desire [and choose] the happiness of being in general, and must be [in purpose] against a disposition to the misery of being in general: because otherwise he would approve of opposition to his own happiness. For if a temper [or a choice] inclined to the misery of being in general prevailed universally, it is apparent that it would

tend to universal misery. But he that [voluntarily] loves a tendency to universal misery in effect loves a tendency to his own misery; and as he necessarily hates his own misery, he has then one inclination [or choice] repugnant to another. And besides, it necessarily follows from self-love, that men love to be loved by others; because in this, others' love agrees with their own love. But if men loved hatred to being in general, they would, in effect, love the hatred of themselves, and so would be inconsistent with themselves, having one natural inclination [and choice] contrary to another." — Nature of Virtue, chap. 8.

156. What comprehensive definition can be given which shall contain the sum of all the definitions, and all that has above been said of holiness?

Holiness is to place and seek our highest happiness in the promotion of the highest, the most valuable general happiness; or, as Edwards says, "virtue consists in the cordial consent or union of being to being in general." — Nat. of Vir. chap. 8, 4.

157. What, then, is sin, so far as in the preceding discussion it has been developed?

The opposite of holiness is sin. Seeking our own happiness as the supreme good, *instead of* the *general* happiness, is sin.

(1.) Placing and seeking our own happiness in the happiness of a part, — in partial good instead of the general happiness, — the universal good, and thus regarding our own happiness as the supreme good, instead of regarding the highest universal holiness and happiness as the supreme good, is sin.

Seeking our own happiness in ways which are opposed to the general good, instead of seeking it in the promotion of, and in subservience to, the general hap-

piness, is sin. And this is selfishness, the sum of all sin, and the source of all the specific, particular sins of ungodly men.

(2.) In sin the will has to carry on a war with reason and conscience, and conscience hurls back its reproaches, until it becomes more or less perverted in its operations, or perhaps so seared as scarcely to act at all, — the desires clamor for sinful gratification, and in the end the sensibilities have heaped upon them a load of shame, remorse, and various suffering too heavy to be borne. Thus it is seen that in sin there is an antagonism, a conflict and war, a discord and contention between all the faculties of the soul of man. The desires and will are in rebellion against the reason, the reason is dissatisfied and at war with the will, and the sensibilities are pained with the conflict.

(3.) As every sinner is at war with himself, and his own interests, so also every sinner is at war with the best interests of every other sinner, and of the whole universe besides. Sin in its natural tendency, unrestrained by the infinite omnipotence of Jehovah (if it *could*) would go on in its direful work of damage to the universe, until it had rolled the volume of desolation through the empire of the Eternal.

CHAPTER XIII.

BENEVOLENCE INCLUDES ALL THE VIRTUES.

The following entire chapter is designed to be an answer to the question,

158. Does benevolence include all the specific virtues, — all that is holiness, in the proper sense of the term?

In the first place we give a full and explicit but only a general answer, and then proceed to a more minute consideration of particulars.

Benevolence is benevolent love. The term is compounded of *bene* and *volens*, rightly willing, — goodwill, or holy love. It is that love which both the written and unwritten law of God requires, — it is that love which is the fulfilling of this law. All benevolence, therefore, consists in right acts of will, and all right acts of will are benevolence.

Since all holiness consists in right acts of will, benevolence must include the general principles of holiness, and all its modes and forms of manifestation. Therefore, benevolence includes all that is holiness in all its senses.

Since all possible good consists in happiness and the means of happiness, all holiness must consist in the benevolent love of happiness, and in the love of the appropriate and best means and causes of happiness.

There is no other good that ought to be or can be loved with a holy love.

Benevolence is sometimes used in the restricted sense of doing good to others, not comprehending doing good to ourselves. The meaning of benevolence in this discussion comprehends doing good to all, ourselves and others.

159. Into how many classes may the objects of benevolence be divided?

(1.) Happiness, and all beings capable of happiness, and all who are capable of intelligently promoting happiness, are comprehended in one class.

(2.) All the natural means of happiness in distinction from those means which have a moral character, either sinful or holy. Whatever natural object may be with propriety used as the means of increasing happiness, is a proper object of benevolent love.

(3.) Holiness and holy beings, or the benevolent means and causes of happiness, form a third class of the objects of benevolent love.

160. Into how many classes may the objects of benevolent hatred be divided?

The objects of benevolent hatred may be divided into three classes corresponding to the objects of benevolent love.

(1.) Misery.

(2.) The natural means and causes of misery which have no moral character, and which tend to increase natural evil.

(3.) Sin and sinners, or those means and causes of misery which have a sinful character.

N. B. Love to an object implies hatred to its opposite. Love of holiness implies hatred of sin. Hatred to a sinner on account of his sinning implies a disposi-

tion to approve of his being punished, but is consistent with a choice that he may be reclaimed, forgiven, and made happy. A benevolent hatred to the sinner for opposing the greatest public happiness necessarily springs from love to that happiness. The choice to obtain or promote an object implies a choice of the necessary means of obtaining or promoting it. Therefore, the voluntary love of an impersonal object implies the choice of the means necessary to obtain or promote that object. Benevolent love to a person implies choice to promote his happiness.

161. What is the primary source of all obligation, law, and duty?

The primary, original source of all obligation, law, and duty, lies in the greatest good, and the need that *that* good should be gained, and in the power to promote it, which includes the involuntary love or desire of happiness which exists as an essential element in the nature of moral beings. This desire is necessarily inherent in our created constitution; for without it there could be no possible motive to duty and no power whatever to perform it.

Therefore, the voluntary love of highest happiness as the ultimate good, is and must be the essential, elementary principle, in the nature of holiness in all the modes and forms in which it can be exercised.

162. What, then, are the general forms of benevolence which comprehend all the more specific modes in which holiness can be exercised?

Since all the *objects* of benevolent love are comprehended in the three classes above designated, all holiness must be comprehended in the three corresponding general forms of benevolence.

(1.) Benevolent love of happiness.

(2.) Benevolent love of the *natural*, appropriate means of happiness.

(3.) The benevolent love of the *benevolent* means and causes of happiness. This is complacent love, or complacential benevolence, or the love of holiness or holy beings because they are holy. These three forms of benevolent love imply three corresponding forms of benevolent hatred of the three corresponding opposite classes of objects. From all this it follows, that whatever in the *nature of things* is or may be made the means of increasing general happiness, constitutes a foundation of moral obligation to moral beings to use those means in the promotion of happiness, whenever there is opportunity to do so.

163. What is benevolence in its *simplest* form?

Benevolence in its simplest, elementary form is voluntary love of highest happiness, or love to sentient beings, rational and irrational, as capable of happiness and capable of promoting it, and should bear a reasonable proportion to the extent or amount of capacity for happiness and for promoting it, which in our judgment they possess. It is a disposition and choice to promote their best good and happiness in our power as there may be opportunity.

This is the fundamental, elementary principle of holiness. It is the *primary* fountain and general source from which all the *specific* forms of virtue flow. This is the mainspring which gives to benevolence in its more complex forms its vitality, activity, and energy. It is the only possible source, from which holy action in specific forms can proceed.

164. Why *must* holiness, in all its forms of manifesta-

tion, in all circumstances, have this relation to happiness, of being the voluntary love of highest general happiness, and thus be relative good?

That holiness, in all the forms and circumstances of its manifestation, should have the relation to happiness, of being the voluntary love of the highest general happiness, appears to be absolutely essential to its true nature, and necessary to the possibility of its existence, for the following reasons,—

(1.) Because the desire of happiness is the generic motive, which comprehends all possible motives to voluntary action of whatever kind, and because without this no voluntary action whatever is possible.

(2.) Because happiness is the only ultimate, absolute, and complete good in itself, which is possible, or which can possibly be conceived of. No other good is ultimate, absolute, or complete in itself as happiness is.

(3.) Because highest general happiness is a *greater* good, than any less or partial, private good *can* be.

For these reasons holiness in its own unchangeable nature, and in the necessary nature of moral beings, must have the relation to happiness, of being the voluntary love and choice of the highest general happiness, because this *relation of moral action to happiness* is an essential constituent of holiness; by this the essential relation of holiness to happiness it is constituted holiness. It must, therefore, in its own essential nature be relative good, but not ultimate and absolute good as happiness is. If holiness had not the relation to happiness of being in some degree productive of happiness, it would not be a possibility in human action; and, therefore, because it is *productive* of happiness, it is a *possible* good. And because it is *promotive* of happiness on the whole, it is a *real* and valuable good, and

because it is the designed, rational, and voluntary promotion of highest happiness, it is a *moral* good, and for all these reasons together it is right.

165. Why are we under obligation, with the simplest form of benevolent love, to love one being more than another?

(1.) The reason why we are under obligation to love any sentient being, with the simplest kind of love, is that he is capable of happiness, and because all happiness is an ultimate good, valuable in and for itself as nothing else is. The most insignificant insect that comes in our way and is capable of happiness, is on that account worthy of our regard, in proportion to our knowledge or judgment of its capacity for happiness. All needless infliction of pain or the prevention of happiness is wrong, is sin.

(2.) The first reason why we are bound to love some beings more than others is, that they are capable of more happiness than others are; and the second is, that some beings are capable of *promoting* more happiness than others are; and the third is, that, for various reasons, we can promote more happiness for some beings than for others; and the fourth is, that a greater amount of happiness is a greater and more valuable good than a less.

For these reasons (in this sense of love) we should love a man more than a brute, and some persons more than others.

We should love God (with this kind of love) more than all other beings because he is capable of more happiness, and of promoting more happiness, than all other beings, his pleasure is more than that of all other beings, and therefore we are under supreme obligation to please him.

166. Why is it necessary to qualify the love of happiness with the predicate benevolent?

The predicate benevolent is applied to the love of happiness, to distinguish it from all the forms of selfish love of happiness, and from that involuntary love of happiness, which of necessity belongs to the nature of all sentient beings. In this last sense of love, no man good or bad in the possession of his reason, can avoid loving and seeking his own happiness in all his voluntary doings, any more than he can avoid all thinking. This kind of loving happiness is not a matter of choice, but altogether of absolute necessity. This is what all men do and must do while they have the use of their faculties. (See q. 114.)

167. What are some of the most important specific duties that belong to the simplest form of benevolent love?

(1.) Love to the happiness of brute animals of all kinds which are capable of happiness. "The merciful man is merciful to his beast."

(2.) It is our duty to seek, but never to sacrifice, our own highest or eternal happiness. "Flee from the wrath to come." Matt. 3: 51. "Lay hold on eternal life." 1 Tim. 6: 12. "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." Matt. 6: 20. "Oh, that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them and with their children forever." Deut. 5: 29.

(3.) It is our duty to seek the happiness of our fellow men, to be just, honest, and truthful in all our commercial dealings, and to be faithful to fulfil our promises to them, and to regard their rights of property and their right to a good name, so far as they have that right. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men." Gal. 6: 10. "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty,

give him water to drink." Prov. 25: 21. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you; that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matt. 5: 44, 45. We ought to love a sinner because he is capable of happiness and capable of promoting it, that is, because he is *capable* both of happiness and holiness.

(4.) It is our duty to pity and relieve the distressed and miserable, to clothe the naked, feed the hungry, plead for the widow and fatherless, and to visit and comfort them in their affliction, to remember those that are in bonds as bound with them, and to obey the righteous laws of civil government. These deeds are virtuous only when performed in the exercise of benevolence.

(5.) There is a duty of meekness and forbearance under the reception of injuries, and of forgiveness of those who injure us. "Forbearing one another and forgiving one another." Col. 3: 13. "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matt. 6: 15. These deeds, also, are virtuous only when they spring from benevolence.

(6.) It is our duty to promote the happiness of heaven, of the angels, and of God. There is joy in heaven over men who turn from sin to holiness. Angels and God rejoice over holiness on earth, and we ought to increase that joy to the utmost extent in our power, by increasing that holiness. Here we see that different forms of benevolence may to some extent include each other.

168. What is implied in the second and more complex form of benevolence?

The second form of benevolent love may be regarded as somewhat complex, because it implies two things: (1.) The love of general happiness; (2.) The love of the *natural* means of that happiness; because they produce, or are the means of happiness, and for no other possible reason.

169. What are some of the most important duties which belong to the second general division of benevolence?

The most important duties, consisting in love to the natural, in distinction from the moral, means of happiness, are, the duty to gain knowledge, property, health, and power — both physical and mental. To this end duty requires temperance and total abstinence from every hurtful thing, diligence, industry, prudence, economy, and frugality in providing the necessary comforts of life, the means of living and of doing good. "If any man provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." 1 Tim. 5: 8. "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." Rom. 12: 17. "This we commanded you, if any would not work neither should he eat." 2 Thess. 3: 10. "Let him that stole, steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." Eph. 4: 28.

170. In what does the third form of benevolence consist?

The third form of benevolent love is the love of holiness, and is designated *complacential benevolence.* It consists in the love of benevolent means of happiness.

We regard it as complex in its nature, because it implies two things, viz. the love of happiness and the love of holiness. It implies the love of the happiness of holy beings, because they are holy, and not *merely* because they are sentient beings.

Complacential benevolence should be exercised in a reasonable proportion, as far as our faculties will admit, to the amount of holiness which is its object.

Complacent, benevolent love of holiness implies displacent, benevolent hatred of sin; for holiness and sin are moral opposites. Of necessity, we hate that which opposes what we love. I cannot choose to go north and south at the same time. While I choose to go north, I must hate that which compels me to go south; e. g. a man making his way for his life from the unhealthy regions of the torrid zone to the more healthy climate of the north, will hate to be compelled to go back.

171. What are some of the most important specific forms of complacential benevolence?

(1.) To make diligent, earnest, and persevering efforts, on a broad scale, to promote the holiness of ourselves and others; to persuade sinners to become reconciled to God; to send the gospel to all lands, that the world may be converted to holiness; to choose the society of holy persons, in order to the promotion of each other's holiness, — are duties in which complacential benevolence is exercised.

(2.) Brotherly love and kindness; love to the disciples of Christ, because they are his disciples; purpose to make holy beings happy, because they are holy.

(3.) Justice, as a virtue, implies love to holiness and hatred to sin; it promotes holiness and happiness; it

discourages sin and prevents misery, both by rewards and punishments.

In the exercise of justice, holy beings, men, and angels are made happy by the moral Governor of the universe, because they have chosen to promote the general happiness; and wicked men are made miserable, because they have chosen to seek their own private, selfish, and lower good, rather than and in opposition to highest general good. All this is done because it is necessary to promote the greatest public good.

Justice rewards the holy for promoting happiness, and punishes the wicked for preventing happiness and promoting misery. Its object in all this is to promote holiness and happiness, and to prevent sin and misery. Justice bestows those rewards, and inflicts that punishment, which the greatest public good and happiness require (including the happiness of all who have not forfeited it by their invasion of the public good), for this reason, and for no other, that the public good so requires.

(4.) Gratitude is the choice to requite a benefactor, — to promote his happiness, because he has chosen to promote ours. Gratitude, as a virtue, is love of the holiness and happiness of a benefactor.

N. B. It is to be remembered that benevolence, in some of its exercises, is not precisely confined to any one of its specific forms, but includes more or less of the others.

The fourteen following questions and answers arise from the three general forms of benevolence above named: —

172. (1.) Why are we bound to love one individual more than another with the different forms of benevolent love?

There are five comprehensive reasons why we should, with the different kinds of benevolent affection, love some persons more than others.

1st. Some persons are capable of more happiness than others. 2d. Some persons are capable of *promoting* more happiness than others are. 3d. We can do more to promote the happiness of some than of others, e. g. our children, neighbors, etc. 4th. And some are more holy than others, and, by their holiness, do promote more happiness than others. 5th. We *know* more of the holiness of some than we do of others, and we can do more to promote the holiness of some than of others; and the greater the amount of holiness and happiness, the more valuable it will be.

173. (2.) Why ought we to love a holy man?

We ought to love a holy man, 1st. Because he is capable of happiness. 2d. Because he is capable of promoting happiness. 3d. Because he is supremely devoted to the work of promoting happiness, and that by the best means, viz. by promoting *holiness*, which is itself promoting happiness. 4th. Because our love to him will be a source of happiness to ourselves; or, 5th. To him and to all holy beings who shall ever have a knowledge of that love.

174. (3.) Why should we love God more than all other beings?

We should love God supremely, 1st. Because our love to him will please him more, give him greater pleasure, than our love to any or all other beings would give to them; i. e. he will take more pleasure in our love to him than all other beings can take in our love to them. 2d. Because that love to him which is necessary to please him is necessary to promote the highest happiness of *being in general*, or the whole universe.

3d. Because there is a greater amount of holiness in God than in all other beings. 4th. Because the reasons why any being ought to be loved more than another, exist to a greater extent in God than in all other beings.

175. (4.) Why is veracity or truthfulness a universal duty, at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances?

Do you say because it is right, reason demands it. True. But our question goes deeper, and asks for the reason why it is right, — why does reason demand it? This is the question.

And this the answer. 1st. Because the general welfare demands it. The highest degree of universal happiness demands it. 2d. Trust in God, and the honor of God demand it. 3d. Self-respect — the true dignity and worthiness of every man's soul demand it. Lying, self-degradation, remorse, shame, and misery go together, as they most fitly belong together in the nature of things. 4th. If exceptions to the rule be admitted, we can never know when or where to stop in admitting them. For all these reasons universal veracity is right, — is obligatory. We must practice veracity, or in all these ways we shall ultimately sacrifice both *individual* and the general good, well-being, and happiness.

These considerations most plainly commend themselves, as adapted firmly to settle the question in every honest mind. Nothing more than plain, honest, common sense, is needful, to perceive that the common good demands a strict adherence to the principle of universal veracity.

Universal veracity and truthfulness must be the rule, admitting of no exceptions, or the highest general good must, to some extent, be sacrificed. Any other rule

would endanger the public welfare, and prevent, to a greater or less extent, the highest general good.

The rule of universal veracity cannot be intelligently obeyed for this end, without a *benevolent* regard for the highest *holiness* and *happiness* of the universe of moral beings.

176. (5.) What is the difference between veracity as a virtue, and mere selfish truthfulness? and how does it appear that veracity as a duty is benevolence?

1st. There is, in the human mind, a natural, instinctive propensity to speak the truth. Speaking the truth *merely* to gratify this propensity or instinctive impulse, is not virtue.

2d. There is a sense of meanness which attends speaking falsehood. There is no virtue in truthfulness, *merely* to avoid this sense of meanness.

3d. Truth may be spoken for no other than purely selfish ends, or for the accomplishment of the most wicked designs. Surely this is not virtue.

4th. When a person aims at the highest good, or at the general welfare as a controlling principle of action, in telling the truth, his veracity is virtuous, — is true benevolence. Truthfulness is just like any other specific action in this respect. When it is in fulfilment of a benevolent design, it is benevolent usefulness or pure benevolence; when in fulfilment of a selfish purpose, it is sin, — voluntary prevention of happiness and promotion of misery.

Benevolent love exercised in veracity may be directly and merely to promote happiness, or to promote both holiness and happiness.

CHAPTER XIV.

JUSTICE IN ITS VARIOUS MODES AND FORMS.

Before considering particularly the topic of justice, it seems needful to define the terms merit, demerit, ill-desert, guilt, and guilty.

Merit. The desert of approbation, honor, praise, or reward. The desert of that which the public good requires should be rendered to him who has done well. In an ill sense it is synonymous with,

Demerit and ill-desert. These terms signify the desert of disapprobation, dishonor, and punishment, — the desert of that infliction of suffering which the safety of the public weal demands.

Merit, demerit, and ill-desert, are simply the desert of that which the public good demands should be rendered to those moral agents who do well or ill.

Guilt. A person can become guilty only by his own act of sin. The guilt of the sinner is inseparable from the fact that he has committed sin. The term expresses the state of the sinner into which he has brought himself by his sin. This state implies two things, 1. The fact that he has sinned, which can never be done away. 2. The necessity that he should be punished for his sin, which may be removed only by an atonement upon condition of repentance and faith in Christ as an atoning Saviour where the Saviour is known.

177. (6.) What is the generic idea of justice, — jus-

tice in its broadest sense, — that which alone may be properly termed general justice?

General justice, — justice in its most comprehensive sense, — is that action and state of mind which fulfils all that moral law or moral obligation or duty requires. It is only another name for righteousness, holiness, general benevolence, universal love and good-will, or doing that which is just and right, — doing that which ought to be done. Whatever being should do all this would be just, whether Creator or creature. And his justice would consist in doing all that benevolence requires, — all that can be done for the greatest good. A creature who had done all this would be justified before God by deeds of law.

Justice, in all cases, is that which is demanded by the greatest public good and well-being, so that this demand, in all cases and circumstances whatsoever, is the foundation and measure of justice.

The demands of reason and conscience, of eternal truth and righteousness, the requirements of the highest individual and general good, and the demands of justice, are all one and the same demand. And whenever any of these demands or rights are violated, justice is violated.

While individual, private good must be held subordinate and subservient to the public good, universal and private good mutually subserve, and are always perfectly consistent with, and mutually imply, each other. One never need to be sacrificed for the other, except in the case of crime, and, therefore, with this exception, never ought to be.

Whatever accomplishes that which moral obligation, or the highest general good demands, fulfils the demands of justice.

178. (7.) To what does general justice, according to Dr. Edwards, chiefly have respect?

General justice chiefly has respect to the eternal, unoriginated law of right, and consists in compliance with the demands of that law. According to Dr. Edwards, "General or public justice respects what are called the rights of a community, whether a city, state, empire, or the universe. This kind of justice [or rather justice in the generic sense] requires the public good; and whenever that is violated or neglected, the public is *injured.* . . . To practice justice in this sense, is no other than to act from public spirit, or from love to the community, and with respect to the universe, it is the very same with general benevolence." — Vol. i. p. 73. "*General* or *public* justice comprehends all moral goodness. . . . In this sense, whatever is *right*, is said to be *just*, or an act of *justice;* and whatever is wrong or improper to be done, is said to be *unjust* or an act of *injustice.* To practice justice in this sense, is to practice agreeably to the dictates of general benevolence, or to seek the glory of God and the good of the universe. And whenever the glory of God is neglected, it may be said that God is *injured* or *deprived of his right.* Whenever the general good is neglected or impeded, the universe may be said to suffer an *injury.*"

With regard to general justice, "as it comprehends all moral goodness, it is not at all opposed to *grace;* but comprehends that as well as every other virtue, as truth, faithfulness, meekness, forgiveness, patience, prudence, temperance, fortitude, etc. All these are *right* and *fit*, and the contrary tempers or practices are *wrong* and *injurious* to God and to the system; and therefore in this sense of justice are *unjust.* And even *grace* itself, which is favor to the ill-deserving, so far as it is wise

and proper to be exercised, makes but a part . . . of justice." — Vol. ii. pp. 29, 30.

"The requirement of the public good is the exact measure of justice in this case" * of punishment due to the sinner, without an atonement. The rules of justice in this case as in all others, are determined by the requirements of the general good.

179. (8.) What, therefore, is the original foundation of justice and the sole measure of its requirements?

The greatest possible happiness is the sole foundation of justice. This implies that the greatest possible universal good and the power to promote it constitute the original foundation of justice and of moral obligation, and therefore the sole measure of its requirements.

The requirements of justice are identical with the demands of moral obligation and the demands of the greatest universal good, and are made only upon beings having power to promote that good. By these principles, therefore, justice must be ultimately and finally measured, in the adjudications of the eternal judgment. This is general justice.

180. (9.) What are some of the most important modes and forms in which justice is exercised?

Justice has commonly been divided into three kinds: commutative, distributive, and general justice. We think this division highly calculated to produce confusion of ideas and to mislead. Because, 1st. It seems unnecessary, and an abuse of language to designate one branch of general justice by the term which includes all the branches. 2d. Distributive justice includes all that general justice does, and therefore, 3d.

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* Dr. Edwards's Works, vol. i. p. 500.

Commutative justice includes nothing which distributive justice does not. Distributive justice, as it has been sometimes explained, is rather a circumstantial than an essential attribute, — essential only in the administration of a merely legal system.

We choose rather to designate the chief forms in which general justice is exercised, by the following appellatives: distributive, commutative, governmental, atoning, and forgiving justice.

181. (10.) What is distributive justice?

Distributive justice is rendering to every one that to which *he* has a right, and that which is due to him on account of rights which belong to the public, and to God in the exercise of general benevolence. It is doing to every one that which ought to be done, whatever the reason is why it ought to be done. There seems to be, therefore, no sufficient reason why distributive justice should be called a *kind* of justice; for it seems to comprehend all that is comprehended in general justice. The term distributive appropriately expresses a quality of justice, as it refers to individuals.

When justice is employed in distributing rewards and penalties to the subjects of a moral government, such as (according to their personal character and conduct, — according to their rights and deserts, — merits and demerits) are demanded in a merely legal system by the interests, welfare, best good and happiness of the public, it is then termed distributive justice in the most restricted sense.

" Commutative justice in the recovery of debts, has no respect at all to the character or conduct of the debtor, but merely to the property of the creditor. Distributive justice in the punishment of crimes has no respect

at all to the property of the criminal; but merely to his personal conduct." — Dr. Edwards, vol. ii. p. 29.

Distributive justice (in the restricted sense sometimes given to it) requires the distributing or rendering to every man his dues, whatever these dues may consist in, whether they are due as rewards to which he has a right, or as property or reputation or whatever it may be to which he has a right, or as penalties due to him as exacted by public rights.

On the ground of distributive justice, every man has a right to his own person, liberty, and safety, to his own flesh and blood, muscles and bones and brains, and to *all* his mental powers, and he has a right to protect, preserve, and use them for his own profit and the public good, — he has a right to a just reputation, to the safety of his family, to his property, and to fidelity in the fulfilment of engagements made to him. And then general justice or benevolence requires him to use all his powers, rights, and privileges, for the best good of the whole.

As to the right and obligation of promises, no man has a right to make or fulfil a promise, or to exact the fulfilment of one, even if made under oath, when the promise cannot be fulfilled without the violation of moral obligation, nor without violating the laws of both God and man.

It seems to us that commutative justice is but a form or branch of distributive justice, and that both distributive and commutative justice are but more particular applications of general justice, or general benevolence. Distributive justice demands the rendering to every man his due, because both general and particular justice require and demand it. To violate distributive justice would be to violate general justice.

N. B. Viewed in their true and comprehensive light, individual and public interests never really clash or conflict with each other, except when the individual has forfeited his rights and interests by wickedly injuring the public in their rights and interests, and even then under the gospel of Christ, when that is obeyed, there is no clashing between individual and public interests.

General benevolence, general and distributive justice, when exercised in doing what is demanded by the highest general good, are one and the same thing.

182. (11.) What is commutative justice?

Commutative justice is rendering an equivalent for what is received. It respects property and matters of commerce, and the fulfilment of promises made on conditions, when the conditions have been complied with. It requires the equal exchange and restitution of property. It is the moral law of trade, and ought to be obeyed in all commercial transactions. Commutative justice requires the restitution of property borrowed in whatever form. It requires a fair compensation in wages paid for labor or services received. Any violation of commutative justice involves a violation of general public justice and benevolence, because by commutative injustice the public interests and happiness are in various ways invaded and damaged. We also conceive that commutative injustice is a violation of general and distributive justice, as may be seen from what has been said on distributive justice.

183. (12.) What is governmental justice?

That exercise of justice which is peculiar to a perfect moral governor may be designated governmental justice.

The character of general justice and benevolence is an essential qualification for a perfect moral governor.

But this is not peculiar to a moral governor, — it is common to all virtuous beings. That exercise of justice which is necessary to establish and sustain his authority, or the authority of his law, is peculiar to a moral governor. This must be done by rewards bestowed upon obedient subjects, and either by penalties inflicted upon the disobedient, or by a substitute for deserved penalties adapted to the same end, which would be accomplished by the execution of those penalties. Justice in the moral governor requires that these rewards and penalties should be adapted to show the value of obedience and the evil of disobedience, and to furnish the strongest motives for obedience and for avoiding disobedience. These rewards and penalties, these necessary sanctions of law, must have this adaptation to show the value of obedience, and to furnish the strongest motives for it, to the end that these sanctions may adequately support the authority of the government as the necessary means of the greatest public good.

In the case of transgression, if a substitute for the penalty can be provided which equally sustains the authority of the law, and thus guards the public welfare, justice being that which requires the promotion of greatest universal good, now demands that the substitute should be provided, and when that is provided and accepted, justice no longer demands the infliction of the penalty for the transgression upon the penitent believer, it being incompatible with justice that pardon should be granted during persistence in sin. Atoning and forgiving justice are but forms of governmental justice in particular relations.

184. (13.) What is atoning justice?

Atoning justice is that by which the moral governor,

acting according to the demands of the highest possible good, and of his own infinite wisdom, provides a substitute for the penalty of transgression, adequate to secure the ends of penalty in the public safety, so that he can be just and remit that penalty; i. e. forgive repentant transgressors, restore them to favor, and grant them the privileges of obedient subjects. That repentance which constitutes the condition of forgiveness, consists in turning from sin to the practice of holiness, with a full and hearty purpose of permanent obedience.

185. (14.) What is forgiving justice, in view of an atonement?

While forgiving justice is mercy to the sinner, exercised in showing him *favor* to which he has no right, viewed in his relation to law and to his ill deserts as a transgressor, under a merely legal administration, and not in his relation (as a penitent, reformed, and obedient subject) to the substitute for the deserved penalty provided in the atonement, nor in his relation to an atoning Mediator;—it is favor which he does not and cannot, as a sinner in his relation to law, deserve, because in this relation as a sinner he has forfeited all right to favor;—while forgiveness is thus mercy to the sinner, it is but fulfilling the demands of benevolent love, wisdom, and justice towards the holy subjects of the kingdom of God, and towards the repentant, for whom a ransom has been provided.

The claim for pardon belongs not to the transgressor as a matter of justice, while viewed according to his personal character and ill deserts; but his claim for pardon, so far as he has any, is simply on the benevolence of the moral governor, which can now be wisely exercised towards him, with due regard to the public safety. The claim or right to pardon is not vested in the transgres-

sor, on the ground of his personal deserts, but in God, and arises from his regard to the best interests of his kingdom, and especially of his loyal kingdom, of which the penitent sinner now forms a part.

This is only the claim of general benevolence, being identical with general justice — mercy to the sinner, because unmerited, although a righteous benevolence to him, and a just benevolence to a holy universe.

Thus, in the exercise of forgiving mercy, God is just, and only fulfils the demands of his own infinite wisdom, benevolence, or justice. This is mercy to the sinner, because by transgression having forfeited all right to favor, considered strictly in his mere relation to law, he has also incurred the ill-desert of a just penalty, such as protection to the public weal demands, until a substitute, adequate to the same end, be provided by the moral governor and accepted on the part of the transgressor, by a compliance with the conditions of pardon, on which it can be justly bestowed.

CHAPTER XV.

MORAL GOVERNMENT. — JUSTICE, GRACE, AND MERCY. — RIGHT AS A QUALITY OF LAW AND OF MORAL ACTION.

186. WHAT, then, must be the object of a righteous moral government?

From the nature of benevolence and justice, it follows that 'the object of all human governments which are good and righteous is to secure the best order and highest possible happiness of all over whom they are instituted.' To secure such an object for the universe,

is the object of the moral government of God. Having this object constitutes the righteousness of all these governments.

187. What are the necessary qualifications of a perfect moral governor?

A righteous and perfect moral governor must be able and disposed to make, and to make known those laws which, if obeyed, will secure to his subjects the highest possible happiness of each individual, and of his kingdom as a whole. He must also be able and willing to execute those laws according to the principle of eternal right, equity, and honor, or according to the principle of perfect, impartial, and universal benevolence, or in such a manner as the greatest good of his subjects demands.

Since, as we have seen (q. 16), that the object of a righteous moral government is to be gained by moral influence, rather than directly by physical force or power, it becomes important to understand the difference between them, that we may adequately perceive the wisdom and benevolence by which the moral government of God is adapted to secure the obedience of his subjects and the greatest *happiness* of his obedient subjects, and that we may feel the force and weight of our obligations to obey, and to admit the necessity and justice of the penalties of disobedience.

188. What, then, is moral influence, as distinguished from mere force?

Moral influence is the influence of motives, which move and lead men to make moral choices, and to carry out those choices in moral action. Moral power is the power to exert this influence. Any conceivable amount of moral influence which can be shown to be possible, may be resisted by the agent who is the subject of it,

because moral influence is only the inducement of motive to choose; and always when one choice is made, another choice might be made in its stead. For this reason, a given result of moral influence, however great, is not the necessary — the only possible result, because this influence might be resisted and the result might be different. But it is not so with physical power and effects in the world of matter. (See q. 15.)

189. What is physical power and influence? and how is the influence of physical power distinguished from moral influence?

Physical power is that which, when exerted in like circumstances, always must produce like effects. It is that which, when exerted, does and must produce its *appropriate* effects. This is the uniformity of the laws of nature in the material world.

When God exerts creative omnipotence, creation must come to pass; something must be created, and that the thing designed. The effect must be produced, and there is no power to the contrary able to resist omnipotence and prevent the result. By the mere physical omnipotence of God, all the laws of nature in the material universe are fixed, controlled, or suspended according to his pleasure, or carried into execution, so as to produce the effects designed by their author.

The rock, unsupported, must fall. When powder, properly confined within a rock, explodes, the rock must split. When the necessary power comes upon it, the water-wheel *must* move, and the machinery *must* be driven to certain effects, which *must* result therefrom. And in the circumstances there is no power to the contrary. This is the distinguishing difference between moral influence and physical power, mere force.

No power to the contrary is the universal law in the

world of matter. In the natural, as distinguished from the moral world, when the power of physical causation is exerted in the proper circumstances, the appropriate effects must follow, by a necessity which there is no power to resist. And this is the *natural* necessity of physical power. It belongs to the natural, material world. When effects or events come to pass by natural necessity in the world of matter or mind, there is no power to the contrary except that by which that necessity itself is controlled. When effects or events take place in my mind by a natural necessity, I have *no* power to the contrary. When I act under moral influence, as I do in all my responsible acts, I *have* power to the contrary.

In the moral world, moral acts are all performed under diverse moral influences. But moral influence in a given direction is never irresistible. Under the diverse moral influences which are upon us in all our moral acts, we always have the power of choice, and this by a metaphysical necessity implies the power of contrary choice, for these reasons, —

Power to the contrary is the universal law of responsible, moral action, while no power to the contrary is the universal law of physical influence, power, causation, and *effects*, as distinguished from the moral influence of motives, and from moral, accountable acts.

Therefore, moral power and moral influence are of a nature entirely different from physical power and physical influence, and from the influence of that power which produces a natural necessity.

Here it is important to observe, that physical power may be made use of to produce motives, but if good moral results are secured, this must be done by the moral influence of the motives, and not *immediately* by

the physical force. The physical omnipotence of God in his *providential* government is used as the means of procuring, to some extent, the motives by which his moral government is administered.

As moral agents form their moral character by their moral acts, performed under a moral influence, which they have power to resist, their moral action might be different, and of course their moral character is in their own power, and might be bad, or might be *good*, as they are most sacredly bound to have it good, virtuous, benevolent, or holy.

Therefore, again; moral character cannot be directly produced by a natural necessity, nor by physical power exerted upon a moral agent, because physical power produces its immediate effects by a natural necessity, leaving no power to the contrary.

Only physical *effects* can be immediately produced by physical power and influence.

Physical effects *must be only* what they are. Moral results — moral acts and moral character might be different, and therefore, always might and ought to be good and *benevolent*.

By physical power rocks may be rent, forests felled, nations conquered, steam-engines, water-wheels, and all kinds of mechanical machinery may be irresistibly driven to useful operations and results. By physical power a universe of material worlds may be created, upheld, and caused to move through the immensity of space, and an infinite variety of *effects* may be produced in them, according to fixed laws, enforced by physical Omnipotence, in accordance with the good pleasure of their Creator's will.

But as well might these effects be produced by the moral influence of truth and motives, as that moral

character should be an *effect*, or be immediately produced by physical power, exerted upon a moral agent.

As well might forests be felled by moral influence, and rocks split with arguments, and the furrows of the field be induced to roll over and the earth to open its bosom to receive the seed of the sower, by the persuasive power of eloquence, or 'as well might the sun and moon be governed by the ten commandments,' as that a sinner should be converted, morally reformed and made truly virtuous, by the direct agency of mere physical Omnipotence.

190. What truth of practical importance follows from these premises?

Hence we infer, means should be appropriately adapted to wisely chosen ends.

1st. Physical power, means, and causes are adapted only to the *immediate* production of physical ends, — mere *effects*. 2d. Moral influence only is appropriately adapted to the immediate production, or change of moral character. 3d. And right moral character *only*, consisting in benevolence, is adapted to secure the most valuable happiness of each and every individual in the universe of moral beings, and thus it appears that *benevolence alone*, in moral character, is adapted to secure the greatest amount of universal happiness.

191. What does justice require of a moral governor in the administration of law in a merely legal system, and how does it appear that justice, in its various applications in moral government, is nothing but benevolence in those particular relations?

In a moral government by mere law and its sanctions, rewards and penalties aside from an economy of grace and mercy: —

(1.) Justice requires of a moral governor, who has qualifications necessary to administer a perfect moral government, that he should adapt all his laws and specific commands to the promotion of the highest general happiness, and to this end, that he should adapt all his requirements to the several abilities, and opportunities of his subjects, to know and do their duty, so that they should be required neither more nor less than to promote as much happiness as they can, by the best use of all their powers.

(2.) That he should reward the obedient and punish the transgressors according to their good or ill deserts, which deserts are, and must be, measured by what the public good requires, to the end that the laws shall best protect the public peace, order, and happiness of the community, and of course that rewards and penalties shall be distributed in *the* way, and to *that* extent, which, according to his wisdom, knowledge, and power, is best adapted to promote the greatest amount of happiness in his kingdom.

(3.) That his laws should require of each individual that conduct which will promote his own highest happiness in the long run, and the greatest amount of the general happiness on the whole, that is within his power. So that no one shall ever be required, except for crime, to lose his own highest permanent good, or to do or suffer any thing, which is subversive of the highest general good.

(4.) Since justice requires of the moral governor that all his laws, rewards, and penalties be so administered as to secure, in the highest possible degree, the *happiness* of his subjects, and, by consequential necessity, they must be so administered as to promote that amount of holiness which to him is the highest possible in his realms.

192. What is the difference between grace and justice? Since general benevolence and general justice are the same thing, and since all the grace which God bestows is dictated by, and granted in the exercise of, general benevolence and justice, how can grace differ at all from justice?

Grace differs from justice in this, that God, the moral governor, when the public good does not forbid, and when a substitute for penalty has been provided, may grant as unmerited favors, to the miserable and ill-deserving as viewed in their own personal character, and which, of course, according to their personal deserts, sinners do not deserve, and in justice to them in this relation, may be withheld. When the demand for inflicting penalty and withholding favors, which is made by the public good, is removed by the provision of a substitute, which can be done only by an atonement, e. g. the atonement of Christ, and by its acceptance on the sinner's part, then benevolence and justice to the obedient universe demand that the sinner be restored to favor; but it is grace to him, because under the mere administration of law he could deserve nothing but penalty.

The right of demand, in the case of a criminal, that a penalty should be inflicted according to his ill deserts, is vested not at all in him, but in the moral governor, in behalf of his own rights and of the general good of his subjects. When this demand arising from the public good is satisfied by an atonement, the moral governor is satisfied, and justice is satisfied, so far as no longer to forbid the exercise of grace, while *general* justice and general benevolence *require that exercise*, just so far as the general good can be promoted by it.

When commutative justice is satisfied, then that does not forbid, nor stand at all in the way of, generous pres-

ents being made to persons, who have no claim for them, either according to commutative or distributive justice. Bestowing such presents, of course, is of grace to them and not of debt. When happiness can be promoted by presents, benevolence is exercised in granting them.

"Grace, as opposed to commutative justice, is gratuitously to relinquish property or to forgive a man his debt." "Grace, as opposed to justice in the distributive sense, is to treat a man more favorably or mildly than is correspondent to his personal character or conduct." — Dr. Edwards, vol. ii. p. 30.

193. In what, then, must grace consist to be virtuous and holy?

Favors granted to the ill-deserving (which, of course, they have no right to demand on the ground of their own merits), for the purpose of promoting happiness and adding something to the general good, is grace, and is one specific mode in which general benevolence and justice is exercised.

Favors to the ill-deserving, so far as justice in all its modes relates to such beings in their relation to a legal system merely, might in justice to *them* be withheld. To grant that to any which could not, in strict justice to them, nor without the highest injustice in their legal relations, be withheld, is not of grace, but of justice. It is granting to them only that which, in strict justice, they have a right to demand.

194. What is the difference between grace and mercy?

Mercy is more nearly synonymous with grace, according to Webster, than with any other word in our language. According to its etymological derivation it has more of the meaning of pity, or relief granted

to the suffering. According to its theological use, it means favor, pity, compassion to the suffering and guilty.

Favor to the undeserving, — that to which they have no personal claim on the ground of their own merits, — is grace. Favor to the *ill*-deserving is both grace and mercy. The grace which sinners in the first place need, is that influence of the Holy Spirit which convicts and reproves of sin, renews and sanctifies the heart, and *then*, on repentance, the grace and mercy which they need is forgiveness, when regarded only in their relation to law, justice might punish; i. e. forgiveness is that to which, as sinners, they have no claim, when in justice to them as such they might be punished, — remission of penalty, which, according to distributive justice, as sinners, they deserve, and therefore in justice to *them*, in this relation, might be inflicted. Mercy, then, is forgiveness where justice might have punished. Here it may be inquired,

195. If in justice to the sinner, as a subject of mere law, penalty *might* be executed, why does not justice *demand* its execution?

The *first* answer is, The right of demand is in the hands of the moral governor, and consists in the necessity that his law and authority should be supported, and the public happiness, peace, and order should be secured and protected. This demand for the support of authority is satisfied by the atonement made by the sufferings and death of Christ, so that *now* upon condition of repentance, reformation, and faith in him, the moral governor may be just and the justifier of the penitent believer. Because the public good and happiness no longer demands the death of the sinner, justice now, in none of its modes, demands that penalty should be

executed. The moral governor may now go forth to the granting of pardon in the exercise of general, impartial benevolence (being identical with general justice), for the purpose of promoting the eternal happiness of his holy kingdom.

The *second* answer is, That the sinner is taken out of his mere relation to law and placed under an economy of grace and mercy, where forgiveness may be granted in the exercise of justice.

Mercy can never be wisely or righteously granted but in subordination to general justice, and consistently with distributive justice. Justice must be satisfied, that mercy is consistent with the general safety and happiness, before it can be granted in a righteous, moral government. And this is all that justice demands.

196. Is there any thing in the idea of right which does not inherently belong to benevolence?

It has somewhere been said, that there is a meaning of right to be distinguished from benevolence. It is somewhat difficult to understand exactly what is meant by this, unless it be something like the following:

(1.) Right is a quality of moral law. This law is right, not because it is benevolence, not because it is the voluntary promotion of highest happiness, for it is neither; but the law is right, because it *requires* benevolence, and because benevolence is the voluntary, designed promotion of the highest happiness in the agent's power.

The rightness of law consists in requiring benevolence. The rightness of benevolence consists in aiming at the highest good, — in doing what the law requires, — in being voluntary obedience to law. So far, then, as the rightness of the law is distinct from the

rightness of benevolence, there is a right to be distinguished from benevolence.

(2.) Or, right as a quality does not express precisely the same idea as benevolence, of which right is a quality.

CHAPTER XVI.

EXPLANATION OF THE DOCTRINE THAT VIRTUE IS FOUNDED IN UTILITY.

197. WHAT is the comprehensive import of the statement that virtue is founded in utility?

(1.) By utility is meant usefulness, or the promotion of happiness.

The following statements of Sir Wm. Hamilton happily show what utility is, and that he was a utilitarian: —

"Considered absolutely, or in itself, the philosophy of the mind comprises two several utilities, according as it, 1st. Cultivates the mind, or knowing subject, by calling its faculties into exercise; and, 2d. Furnishes the mind with a certain complement of truths, or objects of knowledge. The former of these constitutes its subjective, the latter its objective utility."

"I am not one of those who think that the importance of a study is sufficiently established when its dignity is admitted; for, holding that knowledge is for the sake of the man, and not man for the sake of the knowledge, it is necessary, in order to vindicate its value, that every science should be able to show what are the advantages which it promises to confer upon its

student. I therefore profess myself a utilitarian; and it is on the special ground of its utility that I would claim for the philosophy of the mind, what I regard as its peculiar and preëminent importance. But what is a utilitarian? Simply one who prefers the use*ful* to the use*less*, — and who does not? But what is the useful? That which is prized, not on its own account, but as conducive to the acquisition of something else; — the useful, in short, is only another word for a mean towards an end; . . . [*whatever is useful is a mean.*" — Lectures on Metaphysics, by Sir Wm. Hamilton, Edinb. pp. 2, 3.

(2.) Benevolent usefulness is the chosen promotion of highest happiness, as its ultimate object. This implies that virtue is that kind of voluntary utility which has the highest happiness for its ultimate object; and from this it follows, that the desire of utility, or of gaining and promoting happiness, is the primary and essential motive, without which holiness is an impossibility.

(3.) Therefore, the susceptibility of the desire of highest utility, or of a desire to promote the highest happiness of all sentient beings, is an essential element in the *power* to fulfil moral obligation; and therefore, this desire of utility, and the susceptibility of this desire, are indispensable elements in the *foundation* of moral obligation. Let it be remembered that by the foundation of obligation we mean all that which is essentially prerequisite to the possibility of moral action, and to the existence and fulfilment of obligation.

(4.) Benevolent utility, or the intention of promoting the greatest amount of happiness, is, in and of itself, virtuous, *because*, by the intrinsic tendency of its unchangeable nature, it is efficacious to promote the high-

est happiness in the agent's power. This, we think, is what President Edwards meant by virtue's being a good in itself. Benevolence is efficacious to produce the highest happiness in one's power, because it AIMS at the promotion of highest happiness, and is *designed* to be efficacious in the promotion of that happiness.

(5.) Perfect benevolence is the necessary and indispensable means of highest happiness. Nothing else is or can be productive of happiness so valuable, in kind or degree, as benevolence is. Wherever the highest virtue is, there is the production of the highest happiness in the agent's power, either immediately or in its more remote consequences, or both. And the promotion of highest happiness is nowhere else but where the efficacious tendency of holiness is.

If highest happiness can be found as the production of any other action or cause, aside from supreme benevolence, we admit our doctrine must be amended.

(6.) An act of choice is constituted benevolence by being a choice of the highest good, and choice of the most efficacious means of that good known or properly supposed to be in one's power. Therefore, by benevolence, and only by benevolence, can a man promote the highest good in his power.

(7.) The essential relations of holiness to happiness are principally comprehended in the four following statements: 1st. A person in holy action must have for his ultimate subjective and objective end and object the greatest general happiness, including his own, which is known, or properly supposed, to be in his power; 2d. The desire of personal happiness is the primary motive to holiness, and is essential to the possibility of its performance; 3d. Holiness is the designed or chosen means of the highest and most valuable

sum total of happiness; or, 4th. Benevolence is, by the intrinsic tendency of its own nature, in and of itself, the indispensably necessary and efficacious means of highest happiness to the individual and the universe, in the agent's power, when his benevolence is an entire fulfilment of all his obligations.

By the doctrine that benevolent rectitude is founded in utility, we mean also that benevolence is constituted holiness by these its principal relations to happiness; and that supreme, impartial, and universal benevolence includes all that is comprehended in holiness in all its forms of manifestation. Also, that the relations of holiness to happiness constitute its only and all its real value and moral excellence, and that to promote all the happiness of ourselves and others which is actually in our power, by the best use which we can make of our faculties, comprehends our whole duty; therefore when this is done, all our duty is done. It should always be remembered that these relations of benevolence to happiness imply the correlative relations to misery.

(8.) Since holiness and sin are moral opposites, the vileness, odiousness, or turpitude of sin is founded in its relations to happiness and misery. These relations consist in its voluntary hurtfulness, — in its effectual tendencies to prevent happiness and promote misery. Its turpitude consists in its being a *voluntary* damage to the universe, and this depends upon its being the *choice* of the less in preference to the greatest good, — the choice of the private and partial, in opposition to the general and universal good; so that the relations of sin to happiness consist in its being the voluntary prevention of highest happiness, and the voluntary promotion of misery that cannot be measured nor estimated.

198. What gives this doctrine of benevolent utility and rectitude so strong a hold upon the popular mind?

The chief reason why this doctrine takes so strong a hold upon the popular mind, when properly explained and fairly understood, is not because it can be esteemed as congenial to the selfish heart, nor because it fails to set forth the excellence of holiness or the exceeding sinfulness of sin, — for it does the opposite of all this, — but rather because it so decidedly commends itself to sound reason, to the common sense and conscience of mankind.

199. What is the sum of the evidence that supreme, perfect benevolence has an effectual tendency, which will actually secure the highest amount of good and happiness in one's power?

It has been a leading design of different parts of this discussion to exhibit the evidence of this doctrine.

To sum up the substance of this evidence, it may be noticed: (1.) That virtue is the intelligent choice of the highest good in one's power.

(2.) Choosing an object, or to promote an object, which is in our power, is the sure way to obtain or promote that object. If in this way we could not obtain the object of our choice, and of our laborious and faithful pursuit, this would prove it not to be in our power. For these reasons, supreme, impartial, and universal benevolence (when it is the entire fulfilment of one's obligations) is the sure, certain, and only way to promote the highest happiness, usefulness, or holiness which *is truly* in our power.

(3.) An object that is not within my power, nor at all within the reach, nor even supposed to be within the reach of my influence, is not to me an object of choice. I can make no choice in regard to that which

I know not to be within my power. The nature of choice forbids it. The devil and his angels are doomed to eternal misery, "reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Jude 6.

But I can make no choice about that misery, until something about it is, or is supposed to be, within my power or influence. I may be in such a state of mind that I would choose one way or another, if the matter were within my power. I may love God for his retributive justice, because that justice promotes what I choose to promote, viz., the good and happiness of God's kingdom. Or a man may hate that justice, because it opposes what he has supremely set his heart upon, viz., his own selfish interests.

Let me know that there are masses of gold in the centre of the earth, or in the centre of the sun, and I could make no more choice about that mass of wealth and means of happiness, than if it existed only in imagination. If it were within my power, then I could choose concerning it, but not till then, or until by some hallucination I might suppose it to be in my power.

But suppose any good and the means to obtain or promote it to be within my power, then my choice of that good would imply and include the choice of the means necessary to obtain it. Then to choose it would be to obtain it. The choice of it, in such a case, would put that good in my possession.

(4.) To suppose that *chance* would or could be the means of the highest happiness, or even of happiness equal to that which can be produced by intelligent design, would be to make reason a worthless, useless thing, and to degrade wisdom and knowledge to a level with ignorance and folly. And then there would be no

obligation and no need to use our reason in the pursuit of happiness. All which is absurd, and therefore false.

(5.) If different degrees and means of happiness are within my power, the highest degrees and the most efficacious means of happiness which are within my power, are as truly within it as the lower degrees are. Then to choose to obtain and promote the highest happiness in my power (if the intent and endeavor correspond to my ability), would be to obtain and promote that happiness. And then the choice of that happiness, or the aim to obtain, to produce or promote it, properly persevered in, would be the production or the promotion of it.

CHAPTER XVII.

OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF BENEVOLENT UTILITY.

It has been claimed by different and able moral philosophers in opposition to the doctrine of benevolent utility, that it is inconsistent with the structure of language and with the meaning of certain words, viz.: —

That it perverts the true meaning of right, rectitude, virtue, and kindred terms in various languages; that it substitutes the effect for the cause; that, according to this doctrine, virtue is too nearly synonymous with interest, advantage, usefulness, utility, tendency to produce, or production of happiness, expediency, and prudence; that it leaves no room for the distinction between virtue and beauty, virtue and sublimity, etc.; that it takes away from conscience its appropriate office, and from the word conscience its true meaning; that ap-

proval would be little or nothing besides calculation of tendencies and results.

In short, that the important defect of the whole theory is, that it does not embrace the foundation principle of right, and therefore can give no moral system.

If these objections to the doctrine which we hold should prove to be valid, and therefore impossible to be removed, we should be in a sad dilemma, not knowing what to believe, for, if valid, they must be acknowledged to be weighty, and fatal to our doctrine.

Our next object, then, must be to inquire into the validity of these objections.

To begin with the terms right and rectitude.

200. What is the legitimate meaning of the terms, right and rectitude?

There is a natural rightness, and there is a moral rightness, or rectitude.

(1.) Natural rightness is the fitness of natural things to each other. A right line is a straight line. Its length is the shortest distance between two points. Its rightness is its fitness to that distance, or to be the measure of it. A mortice is right when it is adapted to the end for which it is made. A tenon is right when it is fitted to a right mortice. A brace is right when it is fitted to the place and object for which it is needed in the building. Any timber belonging to a frame is right, when it is adapted to answer the purpose for which it is wanted in the building. A coat is right, when it is properly fitted to the form of the man who wears it, or for whom it was made. Any thing is right in this sense, when it is adapted to the end for which it was designed.

Any mechanical work is right, when it is performed according to the rule by which such work should be

done. The rightness of the work consists in its fitness and adaptation to the rule.

All this is natural rightness.

(2.) Moral rightness or rectitude is the chosen, voluntary adaptation of moral conduct to the moral law, which requires its subjects to produce the highest possible general amount of happiness. Moral rightness or rectitude is the chosen fitness of a moral act to this end. It is the agreeableness — the correspondence of moral acts with righteous law.

Moral obligation is founded (as we have seen q. 109, § 3) in the nature and relations of moral beings, by which they have the power and opportunity of promoting happiness, and in the nature of those things by which they have the means of promoting happiness, and it consists in the requisiteness that moral beings should make it their supreme and ultimate object, to promote, in the highest degree in their power, the universal happiness. Moral rectitude consists in the agreeableness, fitness, and adaptation of moral acts and moral character to this nature and to these relations. For these reasons we say that moral law is founded in the nature of things, i. e. in the nature of these things.

That conduct which is meant to be adapted to the highest general happiness, is also adapted to the highest happiness of the agent.

Moral rightness or rectitude, therefore, is the chosen adaptation of our voluntary acts to the law requiring the production of the highest happiness, of ourselves and of all others within our influence.

201. What answer is required to the objection that this doctrine substitutes the effect for the cause?

Should it here be said, that this theory substitutes the effect for the cause, — that right exists before, — that

it is antecedent to its production of happiness, — that right is the *cause*, and happiness is the *result*, and, therefore, that the production of happiness is a distinct thing from right, and does not belong to its nature, we reply, This being a metaphysical objection, requires a metaphysical answer if any.

(1.) Suppose that a right act precedes the production of happiness as much and no more than a cause precedes the production of its effect, will that make the objection valid? We think not.

It would not follow from this, that the tendency and efficacy of virtue to produce happiness, or its production of happiness, does not belong to its nature. To say that the tendency of holiness to produce highest happiness belongs to its nature, and that its nature is to produce highest happiness, is no more substituting the effect for its cause, than to say 1st. That the tendency of a cause to produce an effect belongs to the nature of a cause; and 2d. That it is the nature of a cause to produce an effect, is substituting the effect for the cause.

All which this appears to amount to is, that the right act precedes the production of happiness logically, but not chronologically, — in the order of nature, but not so in the order of time that there should be the least space of time between the effect and its cause, — and *not* that virtue is not the cause of happiness, and, therefore, not the actual production of that happiness.

The rule of right action must exist and be understood, before the right action by which the rule is to be obeyed can be performed. Power to perform a right act must exist before a right act can be performed. But all this does not imply that there is any right, or rightness in fact, in deed, in action, until the action is performed.

Power is not cause until it is exerted in the production of effects; e. g. power exerted supports a rock, and is, therefore, the *cause* which supports the rock. The cause produces its effect when and while the power is exerted, and that is while the cause exists and the power is in operation.

Take another example. If you light up a blaze in a flash of powder, when does that blaze *begin* to shine? at the time it is lighted or afterwards? At the time surely.

When does this blaze emit light? Surely while it burns, and not in a future time.

When I exert my power in performing a right act, the act is performed, not afterwards. The exertion of the power is the act. Suppose that in time past I chose God for the portion of my soul, and for the comprehensive purpose of pleasing God, and that I actually did please him by doing so. If my act pleased him, I produced pleasure in the mind of God. When did I please him? At the time in which I performed the act, by which I pleased him, or in some later period of time? To say that I pleased God after that pleasure of his was produced, that I performed the act by which I pleased him, before I pleased him, and pleased him after that, would be trying to make a distinction where there is no difference, — it would be an attempt at metaphysical hair-splitting where there is no hair to split, and like an attempt to split a mathematical line, or to divide a mathematical point.

(2.) Again; suppose I view in contemplation a virtuous act, thinking that I ought to perform it. "I see the right, and *approve* it too." This contemplation of the right produces a pleasant emotion of approval within me, and excites the desire to have this emotion con-

tinued and increased by the performance of the right act in contemplation. Without a desire to perform the act, there can be no motive to perform it. And if the act in contemplation does not excite the feeling of approbation, and awaken the corresponding desire, *while* it does not, the act cannot be performed as a *right* act. But I *have* these emotions of approbation and a desire to do the right act, and, being moved by this desire, I perform the act, and am happy in performing it. There is a happiness in choosing God. To choose God or any other object for my portion, when happiness is all on the other side, is inconceivable and impossible. A supposed choice *in* which there is no happiness, is not a *real* choice. ["*In* keeping them [God's commands] there is great reward." Right, seen or perceived, produces pleasure *before* it is possible to perform a right act. The right act produces pleasure *in* its performance, and will be the ground, cause, or reason of pleasure forever afterwards, while remembered or thought of. Now if holiness is absolutely in its own nature unchangeable, then efficacy to produce happiness immutably belongs to its nature, and is an essential element of it. And if there were no tendency in holiness to give happiness to the agent in contemplation even before it is entered upon, to such an agent holiness would be an eternal impossibility.

That this must be so, would seem to be irresistibly evident from the fact, that moral action, in order to be holy, must be designedly adapted to produce highest happiness, as the supreme and ultimate object of its performance.

The very end of the moral law is to require such action as is, in the highest possible degree, adapted to produce the happiness of each obedient subject and of

the whole universe. Action known to have no tendency to produce happiness, if it were among the natural possibilities in human action, would entirely fail of being what the law of right requires.

(3.) Once more: For illustration, motion is the moving of some object. The motion is when the object moves, not after. Cause is the exertion of power producing an effect. There is no time, no extent of duration, between the causing, producing, and production of the effect. The causing, producing, and production is one and the same, precisely identical thing. As cause is the exertion of power producing effects, so virtuous acts are the exertion of the power of action in producing happiness, and, therefore, virtue and the intelligent, chosen production of highest happiness in one's power, in our conception, is one and the same thing, the nature of one is the nature of the other. As the act of God in creating the world was the *production* of it, so his holy action in doing good to his creatures in producing and promoting their happiness, is the production and promotion of their happiness. Now, therefore, we are here again brought to the unavoidable conclusion, that the nature of virtue consists in its chosen and efficacious tendency to produce, and in its actual production of highest happiness. Virtue aims to produce, and therefore does produce, happiness, and thus is the production of the happiness, both of the holy agent and of others.

Take away from virtue either its tendency or its intention to promote highest happiness, and its nature is annihilated, because it would be an impossibility.

To say that virtue is at one time, and that its production of happiness is exclusively in an after-time, so that

one is not the other, appears to be an attempt to separate a thing from itself, or to divide indivisibility. We leave it to the reader to decide whether the objection above considered is fairly disposed of.

But suppose that virtue precedes the happiness which it produces as much as a cause precedes its immediate effects. Suppose there is even an immeasurably short space of time between virtue and the happiness which it produces, will it not be virtue still?

Does not tendency to produce effects, and actual production of effects, belong to the nature of a cause? Who can doubt it? For the same reason, who can doubt that tendency to produce and production of happiness belongs to the nature of holiness?

It is not needful to the doctrine of benevolent utility, to suppose that virtue does not precede the happiness which it is designed to produce as much as a cause precedes its immediate effects, nor that it does not precede the *production* of happiness as much as a cause precedes the causing or production of effects.

Take away from a cause all tendency to produce effects, and you can have no cause left. So let it be an established fact, that no virtuous act in time to come shall have any tendency to promote any happiness to any being, and let this fact be everywhere known for an absolute certainty, and then not another holy act can ever be performed, for the all-sufficient reason, that in such a case there would be no object, for which it would be possible to perform a holy act.

(4.) On the supposition that some anti-utilitarians may think that we have not answered this objection to their full satisfaction, we would remind them that it belongs no less to them to remove this objection, from its bearing upon their doctrine, than it does to us to

remove it, from the bearing which they suppose it has upon the doctrine of benevolent utility.

Let us consider, then, how this objection, if it be valid anywhere, bears upon the best definition of virtue which the wisest anti-utilitarian can give. And we take, for example, the following: "Virtue, as a quality, is that which excites the feeling of obligation, approbation, and expectation of reward." We have no objection to this definition. It is perfectly right and good, as far as it goes; only it does not show what that quality is which excites our approbation. Every one knows that this feeling of approbation of an act which we have performed is a feeling of peculiar happiness.

According to this definition, is not the virtue, or the conception of it, which excites this happy feeling, logically before the feeling which it excites? If our definition of virtue in the concrete is chargeable with putting the effect for the cause, for maintaining that virtue is that act of the will which designedly promotes highest happiness, let the anti-utilitarian show how much less than ours his definition of virtue is justly liable to the same charge.

Now, we should like to have some wise anti-utilitarian show to the world, if he can, that virtue, as a quality, *does not*, in the order of nature, according to this definition, as really precede the happy feeling which it *excites*, as virtue, according to our definition, *does* precede the happy feelings which it *produces;* and then let him show how much less than ours his definition puts the effect for the cause.

And then, in addition, let our anti-utilitarian tell the world how much longer, according to our theory, virtue exists *before* its *production* of happiness, and before the *happiness* which it produces, than virtue as a quality, ac-

cording to his theory, exists before its *excitement* of the feeling of approbation, and how much before this *happy feeling* which it excites.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OBJECTIONS CONTINUED.

BUT to return from this digression to the consideration of the general objection, that the doctrine of benevolent utility is inconsistent with the structure of language and the meaning of particular terms.

According to the doctrine of benevolent utility,

202. What is the difference between interest and duty?

(1.) My interest includes my highest happiness, and all the means necessary to it. The highest good of the universe belongs to the necessary means of my happiness, and therefore my interest includes the greatest good and happiness of the universe. To be more particular, my interest includes air to breathe, food to eat, water to drink, clothes to wear, all my powers of body and mind, knowledge and the means of knowledge,—all those means of happiness which are involuntary and of course have no moral character, as well as my highest holiness possible to me, or, which is the same thing, all the rational, voluntary, and virtuous means of my happiness which are in my power. My interest includes all which my duty does, and much more. Whatever is for my advantage is for my interest.

(2.) My duty includes only the voluntary, intended, or virtuous means of the greatest sum of happiness in

my power; and yet it includes nothing which my interest does not. It is always for my highest interest to do my duty. My duty and my highest interest never clash, but always perfectly coincide. My duty includes only my voluntary actions; my interest includes my possessions and my duty.

Since my interest includes a great many things besides my duty, which are involuntary, and duty includes nothing but voluntary, rational action, which I am bound to perform, therefore, obligation and duty are as far from being synonymous with interest, according to the doctrine of benevolent rectitude, as holiness is from being synonymous with happiness, or possessions with action.

203. What is the difference between virtuousness and usefulness?

(1.) *Mere* usefulness, or tendency to produce happiness, or direct tendency to add to the sum of general happiness, or to individual happiness, or the mere production of happiness, is not virtue. All this belongs to the labor of an ox.

Intelligence, truth known, has a very direct and powerful tendency to produce happiness, and a higher happiness in kind and degree, taking in the whole of duration, than any thing else would have that could be substituted in its place. Mere unintended, involuntary, unknown, and unthought-of tendency of any kind, however direct or powerful, is not virtuousness, nor any approximation to it. There may be, even, intelligent and voluntary production of some happiness where there is no virtue, and naught but sin. Sin produces some happiness, and may prevent some pain, or there would be no temptation nor motive to commit it. And then there would be no possibility of committing it, any

more than there is of practising holiness according to the anti-utilitarian theories.

(2.) *Every thing that promotes happiness is useful.* But nothing is virtuous but that which is intelligently and benevolently useful. Many more things are means of happiness, and are useful, than are benevolent or virtuous. This useful quality belongs to every thing, except happiness, which has any value, and constitutes all the real value that pertains to every thing; that is, it constitutes all that the term *value* expresses, and which belongs to all these things, except happiness.

There may be voluntary usefulness, in a narrow, contracted sense, where the greatest usefulness in one's power is not intended; but there can be no holy benevolence where the greatest usefulness known to be in one's power is not chosen or designed. Virtue is *benevolent* usefulness. It is rational, chosen, highest voluntary usefulness. No other usefulness is virtuous. All other usefulness is not virtue.

A good citizen and a kind neighbor, who is truthful and honest in all his pecuniary transactions, but who has no holiness, may be useful in many ways. But the usefulness of any man is not holiness, if he does not intend the highest general usefulness known to be in his power. "If I give all my goods to feed the poor, and have not charity," — if it be done from a lower objective motive than the highest general welfare, — there is no virtue in all this. Whatever usefulness there may be in it, promotion of highest good and usefulness in my power is not intended, and therefore there is no virtue, no impartial love to the general well-being in it all. *All unintended usefulness* is not virtue; i. e. no unintended usefulness is virtue.

Any undesigned result, any unintended, involuntary,

unthought-of production of happiness which could not at all be expected, according to the common course of things, to appertain to an action, however intelligent the action may be, constitutes no part of the true elements of virtue. I may read a chapter in the Bible for mere sport, or I may sing a scriptural anthem only to make money to use for a selfish purpose, and my singing and reading may be unintentionally productive of the conversion of a sinner to righteousness, and, besides this, may tend to the general good in other ways; but this production of good, and all supposable tendencies to good, which may be the accidental consequence of those acts, are not virtuous in any degree, because the acts in question are not intended to produce any such results as here supposed, nor the highest good in any way; they were performed with no such design. And, as a matter of fact, they are not productive of so much good as they would be if they had been done for the right end and object, viz. the highest good. This action is from a lower motive than the highest good, and therefore does not tend to the highest good, as actions from the higher motives do. Action in which the highest good known to be in our power is not intended, cannot be said even to tend to the *highest* good. Perfect holiness, or the supreme intention to promote the highest happiness in our power, secures higher good than can be promoted in any other way. Nothing else will so satisfy the demands of our own conscience, and secure that feeling of peculiar joy and satisfaction which attends and follows the approbation which reason and conscience give to benevolent usefulness.

Benevolent intention gives higher satisfaction to beholders, especially to such as are holy witnesses, and to

all holy beings, to whom the knowledge of such intention may come, than any other intention does. Nothing is holy that is *not* in any way useful. All perfect holiness is the highest possible voluntary usefulness. But *mere* usefulness is not holiness.

204. What is the difference between the usefulness of beauty, grandeur, and sublimity, and the usefulness of benevolence, — between virtue and beauty, — virtue and grandeur, — virtue and sublimity?

Whatever is grand or sublime excites feelings of peculiar pleasure, and is so far useful and good. But in this there is no voluntary usefulness. Neither beauty, grandeur, nor sublimity is a design to promote happiness, and therefore is not virtue. The usefulness of these qualities is not voluntary usefulness, — it is not the intended production of highest happiness.

The usefulness of created qualities is a very different thing from the usefulness of benevolence, which is the production of happiness by the design of a rational being, and is, therefore, voluntary usefulness or virtue. Virtuousness consists in the qualities of moral acts, which make them virtuous. Beauty, sublimity, and grandeur are qualities of objects which have no moral character. As such they are not moral qualities.

Beauty presents itself to the imagination mainly through the eye or the ear. It pertains to many created objects as a quality of those objects, — to many animals and inanimate things, — to many of the works of nature and art. It pertains to sounds, as in music, eloquence of speaking or reading, and even to thought and style. Virtuousness pertains only to voluntary and designed usefulness, or to voluntary action.

Sublimity pertains to exhibitions of vast power, to vast objects, great and high mountains, extended plains,

rivers, oceans, the sun and moon and starry heavens, — to courage, daring in the midst of great danger to secure objects of sufficient importance. A mighty general conducting the movements of an army in the midst of battle, is much more often an object of sublimity than he is a virtuous man. There may be great sublimity in a man's sacrificing his life to save a city, when there is no virtue in the act. The term beauty is sometimes used in a figurative sense, to mean virtue itself, and the term beautiful to mean the virtuous quality of moral acts.

"Whatever controversies and variety of opinions there are about the nature of virtue, yet all (excepting some skeptics, who deny any real difference between virtue and vice) mean by it something *beautiful*, or rather some kind of *beauty*, or excellency. It is not all beauty that is called virtue; for instance, not the beauty of a building, of a flower, or of the rainbow; but some beauty belonging to beings that have *perception* and *will*. It is not all beauty of *mankind;* for instance, not the external beauty of the countenance or shape or gracefulness of motion, or harmony of voice; but it is a beauty which has its original seat in the mind. But yet perhaps not every thing that is called a beauty of mind, is properly called virtue. There is a beauty of understanding and speculation. There is something in the ideas and conceptions of great philosophers and statesmen, that may be called beautiful; which is a different thing from what is most commonly meant by virtue. But virtue is the beauty of those qualities and acts of the mind that are of a moral nature; i. e. such as are attended with desert or worthiness of *praise* or *blame*." — Edwards on the Nat. of Vir. chap. 1.

205. What, upon the true doctrine of benevolence, is

the difference between virtue and calculation of tendencies and results?

Virtue is obedience to a known law. Some calculations are necessary, sometimes, to find out what the law requires in particular cases. Undoubtedly duty requires, and that quite often, that such calculations should be made. And when made in obedience to the call of duty, it is difficult to see what else they can be but virtuous calculations. How any theory of virtue can be devised which will remove the necessity of such calculations, may not be easily conceived.

When a man counts the cost of different kinds of action, for the purpose of deciding upon the right and benevolent, and for the purpose of acting rightly, his calculation is virtuous. All virtue involves either a calculation, or an intuitive perception, of the different tendencies and adaptation to different results, which belong to different actions, before it could be determined whether such actions could be performed with a benevolent intention or not. When a man calculates what it shall profit him if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, for the purpose of a righteous decision, and then acts according to such decision, virtue is involved, both in the calculation and the subsequent action.

Obligation, duty, requires that all the calculation should be made which is necessary to ascertain what actions we ought to perform.

Although it is an important *part* of the business of life to find out by calculation what our duty is, it by no means follows that to do what we know to be our duty, is not a much greater part. When a person makes a calculation, not for the purpose of subserving the highest good, whether it be to obtain money or fame, or any

other object, his calculation has no virtue in it. It is rather sinful. The same rules should be adopted in deciding the moral character of any process of calculation, which ought to be employed in determining the moral character of any other voluntary procedure. (See q. 146.)

206. What, upon the true theory of virtue, is the difference between calculation and approbation?

To approve sometimes means to approbate or express approbation. But more strictly speaking, approbation is the perception of the rectitude of an action. It is the mind's judgment or cognition that a moral action is right. Calculation is sometimes a necessary preliminary to the formation of such a judgment or cognition. Approbation is either an intuitive perception, judgment, or cognition that an action is right, or it is a judgment that an action is right, based upon calculation or testimony.

207. What is the difference between mere intellectual and virtuous wisdom?

Mere intellectual wisdom is a skilful perception or discernment of the adaptation of means to any kind of ends. In this *simply*, there is no virtue. A man may be as wise as a serpent, and have no virtue. He may be wise to do evil, and, at the same time, "to do good have no knowledge" or disposition or intention.

Virtuous wisdom implies an intelligent perception, and the chosen use of the best means to accomplish the best ends; or an intelligent and voluntary adaptation of the best means to the best ends.

208. What is the difference between prudence and virtue?

Perfect holiness is the highest prudence.

No action is holy which is inconsistent with the most consummate prudence. Sin is consummate imprudence.

Prudence consists in a wise forethought of the natural results, which may be expected from our actions, and in a skilful care to avoid danger and secure good. Needless exposure to danger and the loss of good is both imprudence and sin. "The prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself, but the simple pass on and are punished," — punished for their imprudent simplicity, which, of course, must be sin. So far as prudence or imprudence partakes of a moral character, it implies the voluntary exercise and choice of the mind.

It is prudent to meet danger resolutely and promptly, when by so doing greater danger can be avoided. Prudence requires that a man should take care of his health, safety, and property. It is prudent in summer to lay up food for winter, and in prosperity to prepare for adversity. There may be much of these lower kinds of prudence where there is no virtue, because the highest good is not regarded.

There is no virtue in that prudence, in which there is no regard to the highest good. "I wisdom dwell with prudence," 'and nowhere else. Prudence belongs to my nature. The prudence with which I dwell, being an element of my nature, is a virtuous prudence.'

209. Can the prudence of holy action be distinguished from its holiness?

Take away from any action all that regard to the highest good which is demanded by the highest prudence, and you will have no holiness left. Intelligent prudence is an essential element in the nature of holiness. The prudence of holiness is a holy prudence.

"It is clear, therefore, from what has been said, that it is impossible to be properly virtuous without prudence."— Aristotle's Ethics, p. 175.

The difference between mere worldly prudence and holy prudence is as plain as the difference between a mere regard for personal safety, and the highest regard for universal well-being.

210. What is the difference between expediency and right action?

Rectitude is the highest, broadest, most comprehensive voluntary expediency. To fulfil moral obligation is always in the highest degree expedient, but never inexpedient. Sin, in this comprehensive sense, is never expedient, but consummately inexpedient. Expediency and rectitude both refer to voluntary conduct.

Men sometimes call that expedient which they know is not right, such means, for instance, as are adapted to gain the objects of their unrighteous pursuit. Expediency sometimes signifies the adaptation of means to ends, without any regard to the moral character of the means or ends. That meaning of expediency which is inconsistent with rectitude, is a narrow and unworthy sense, though not very uncommon.

That which is expedient, in the most comprehensive sense, will be found to be always coincident with what is right and obligatory.

About the same difference obtains between right and expedient, as between right and prudent. Prudence is always expedient. To regard one's safety and health merely, is both prudent and expedient, in a lower sense than virtuous expediency. It is expedient to be kind and amiable and to give alms, but these and a thousand other expedient things may be done without performing a virtuous act. All these things may be done because they are expedient in relation to selfish ends, and, of

course, not because they are right, and expedient to obtain the highest good. The vilest men may regard the safety of their persons, possessions, friends, and country, because it is expedient, and at the same time have no regard to what is right, and no regard to the highest good and happiness of the universe, nor to the authority of God.

CHAPTER XIX.

OBJECTIONS CONTINUED.

211. DOES the doctrine of benevolent rectitude and utility take away from conscience, as a complex faculty, its appropriate office, or from the term conscience its true meaning?

Some things said of conscience in Chapter XIII. would apply here, but to give a full answer to this question, there are some other things to be considered.

Conscience is a complex faculty, having two offices. The first is to decide what actions are right and what actions are wrong; the second is to exercise the feelings of the sensibility appropriate to these two kinds of action.

(1.) Reason and conscience, employed in perceiving the moral character of voluntary actions, is the same faculty. It is in the exercise of our reason and conscience that we decide what action is right and what is wrong. We decide the tendencies of actions by their perceived and known results. By the designed and known tendencies and results of an action, conscience decides its moral nature.

In the use of our conscience and reason, we know

that no action, that nothing is of a moral nature, which does not involve choice, purpose, design, or intention. Whatever action we know is designed to do injury, to *promote* pain or misery, we, in the use of our reason and conscience, know to be wrong. "The moment unnecessary pain is inflicted, sin is committed." Whatever action we know to spring from the design to produce the highest happiness in one's power for all within the reach of his influence, that action conscience decides to be right, virtuous, and holy; e. g. God makes us happy by "sending us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." By this we know he *designs* to make us happy, because in this way he does make us happy. By the effects and results of his design, we know so far what that design is; and by *these* we know its tendencies and moral nature to be holy, right, and good. To know these things, is the first department of conscience.

(2.) When conscience, in its first office, perceives the right or wrong of any moral acts of ourselves or others, its second office is to excite and exercise, in the sensibility of the soul, the appropriate feelings of approbation and complacency, or of disapprobation and displeasure and disgust. When conscience decides our own designs and doings to be right, it excites the involuntary feelings of self-approbation, a happy feeling of complacency, of peculiar joy. When conscience perceives our conduct and purposes to be wrong, it excites the involuntary feelings of disapprobation, disgust, self-condemnation, self-reproach, and remorse, in different degrees.

Thus we see the office of conscience is complex, involving the intellectual perception of the moral quality, the right and wrong of actions, and exciting the appro-

priate feelings in the sensibility of the soul. Conscience does not cognize right and wrong as pertaining to the phenomena of the intellect, nor of the sensibility, but of the will.

In the two offices of conscience we see its true nature, and the correct meaning of the term.

212. What is a good and tender conscience?

When, in the exercise of our reason, we perceive that our supreme purpose in all we do is to promote the highest good and happiness of all within our influence, we have the testimony of what is called in Scripture a good conscience, a conscience void of offence toward God and man. When our reason, properly and faithfully exercised, decides our intentions to be right, then we have a good and pure conscience. A tender conscience is quick to feel, in view of any even the smallest wrongs of ourselves or others, and of course it implies a quick perception of wrong.

213. What is a guilty, or an evil conscience?

When reason, appropriately exercised, condemns our conduct as sinful, we have a guilty or an evil conscience.

214. What is meant by a seared and hardened conscience?

When, by continued practice in sin, our sensibility becomes so stupefied, and we are so slow to feel, that we have little or no feeling in view of sin, either our own or that of others, our consciences may be said to be hardened and seared as with a hot iron. A sensibility which is slow to feel, in view of sin, is a hardened conscience.

215. How can a person be certain that his conscience will guide him in the way of holiness?

We have seen (q. 149), that conscience is God's vice-

gerent in the soul, and as such has a rightful authority to control the actions of our wills. Therefore, appropriately exercised, conscience must guide us right. In order to be certain that conscience does guide us right, we must be certain that we make the best use of our reason, the Bible, and other means in our power to enlighten our conscience, and then be sure that we follow where conscience leads, and it will not fail to guide us in the way of holiness. In this way, conscience may be an infallible guide, a guide that *will not fail.*

"Morality requires, not only that a man should act according to his judgment, but that he should use the best means in his power that his judgment be according to truth. If he fail in either of these points, he is worthy of blame; but, if he fail in neither, I see not wherein he can be blamed." — Dr. Reid on the Active Powers, Essay V. chap. 4.

216. Why does conscience decide some actions to be virtuous, and others sinful?

Conscience perceives that some actions of the will have such an efficacious tendency to produce, that they actually do produce, the highest happiness in the agent's power. It also perceives that those acts of the will which produce such results are designed to produce them, and that a design to produce the highest happiness in our power is therefore the voluntary, chosen production of that happiness. For these reasons, conscience decides that such actions are virtuous.

Those actions of the will which conscience perceives are not designed to produce such results, and because they are not so designed do not produce such results as the highest happiness, but the opposite results of deepest misery, for these reasons, conscience decides to be wrong. This decision of conscience, that certain acts

of the will are right and others wrong, is an exercise of the reason, and not of the sensibility.

217. What answer does unperverted reason give to the question, Why am I bound to be benevolent?

To say that I am bound to be benevolent because I am, instead of giving an answer, is rather an implicit confession that I cannot give an answer, *or* to claim that no answer is needed. If benevolence, and not happiness, were *ultimate*, this might be a proper answer, as far as any answer could be.

But conscience affirms a reason can be given why I am bound to be benevolent, and that reason is, because by benevolence I can promote the most valuable happiness in kind and degree. Or, I am bound to be benevolent because this is the way, and the only way, to promote the highest happiness in my power, and because happiness, and not holiness, is ultimate good.

218. Why, then, am I bound to be voluntarily useful?

I am bound to be useful to the extent of my ability, for precisely the same reason that I am bound to be benevolent. No reason can be given why I am bound to be benevolent, which is not just as good a reason, why I am bound to be useful. Voluntary highest usefulness is benevolence, and nothing else besides voluntary usefulness is benevolence.

219. What, then, is the ultimate or last reason that conscience can give for fulfilling moral obligation?

(1.) The ultimate or last *objective* reason, that can be given for fulfilling moral obligation, is, that happiness is the only ultimate and absolute good, and that the highest happiness of the universe is the highest and best conceivable objective object, that can be accomplished by holy action.

(2.) The last *subjective* reason that can be given for

holy action is, that by this only can the agent's highest happiness be secured. To sum up these two reasons in one, the *adaptation* of holy action to promote the highest possible amount of universal happiness, is the last reason that an enlightened and rational conscience can give for fulfilling moral obligation; because this includes both the ultimate *objective* object and the ultimate *subjective* object of holy action.

The *ultimate* object of holy action must be the *last* reason that can be appropriately asked for or given for such action. Bear in mind here that the object of holy action implies a desire for that object.

If happiness is the only good complete in itself, and, therefore, the only absolute good, and if the highest general happiness is the only possible ultimate object of holy action, the man who cannot *see* that he is bound to perform a kind of actions, because they will promote the highest general happiness, must, for aught we can do for him, be left to his blindness. How a man, who cannot see this, can be a moral agent and be under moral law, we cannot understand. We do not believe there is such a man, who has common sense, in the world.

N. B. — If any one should say that the last and all the reason that can be given why we are bound to be holy, has not been given above, let him undertake to tell why two and two are four and no more, why one is not two, why round is not square, why black is not white, and why absurdity is not real, absolute truth. We are here willing to leave it for the reader to judge whether there is any thing in the doctrine of benevolent utility which is inconsistent with the structure of language and the meaning of terms, especially with the meaning and office of conscience, and the true nature and foundation and extent of moral obligation.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DIFFERENT TENDENCIES OF BENEVOLENCE TO PROMOTE HAPPINESS.

220. WHAT are some of the most important tendencies of benevolence to promote happiness?

The most important forms in which the tendencies of benevolence to promote happiness are manifested, are included in the three following.

Benevolence tends to confer happiness

(1.) Upon those who approve it;

(2.) Upon those who are the objects of it; and

(3.) Upon those who practice it.

(1.) Benevolence tends to confer happiness upon those who approve it. When men behold conduct, whether performed by themselves or others, which they judge to be holy, virtuous, or right, or which they approve; when they witness an intention of promoting happiness, or contemplate their own performance of a right action in future, there is a pleasurable feeling produced in their minds by this approving judgment, sometimes called the feeling of approbation. Men enjoy this feeling in different degrees, whether they practice virtue or not. This feeling, in view of rectitude, is the natural production of virtue, in connection with our moral constitution. This feeling, as a motive, is of needful influence to the extent of being indispensable to the possibility of a holy act. With all men its influence is indispensable. It has an extensive, powerful,

and salutary influence with a large majority, if not with all unholy men, to keep them back from sin, and to induce them to turn from sin to righteousness, to the practice of virtue.

How much the pleasure which even ungodly men enjoy in this life, depends upon their approbation of the right, it is impossible to decide. Their well-being, however, must to a great extent depend upon their perception and approval of the right.

There is a pleasure in the approval of right. And the whole amount of pleasure, thus derived by the universe of moral agents, is great.

(2.) Benevolence confers happiness upon all sentient beings who are the objects of it. By it, how many hearts, needing consolation and relief from all the varieties of suffering which flesh is heir to, have been made to sing for joy. By the benevolent, the naked are clothed, the hungry are fed, the distressed are comforted and made happy, the debased are exalted, the ignorant are instructed, the vicious are reclaimed, made holy and happy.

Who can estimate the amount of happiness thus secured to the objects of benevolence?

All sensitive creatures, rational and irrational, are the objects of God's benevolence. All the happiness they enjoy, more or less directly depends upon, and is the fruit, the intended result, of his love and good-will. All created beings depend upon God for all their powers and means to obtain, and capacities to enjoy, happiness. All the happiness in the universe of every kind and degree, therefore, in an important sense depends on the goodness of God. But for this no creature could exist to be happy.

(3.) Benevolence is, by the intrinsic tendency of its

nature, a source of joy to those who practice it. They who practice virtue, derive happiness from it in two ways,

1st. From their own practice of it. Benevolence confers a higher happiness upon its subjects, than is possible for it to confer upon its objects who are not holy. Holiness as a practice, a pursuit, a life, is an indispensable want. It is the one needful thing, without which that happiness which it is the end of our being to enjoy for ourselves, and to promote for others, can never be attained.

Holiness satisfies the demands of reason and conscience. The satisfaction that arises in the mind from the exercise of benevolence, — from the testimony of a good conscience, is a very peculiar happiness; it is the most excellent and valuable happiness enjoyed by the human mind. No other happiness can equal it in kind or degree. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly. . . . His delight is in the law of the Lord." Ps. i. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20: 35.

"Virtue alone is happiness below."

"Holiness is the joy of heaven."

"No joy can be compared to this,
To serve and please the Lord."

The nature and tendency of righteousness is to exalt in glory, honor, and happiness any individual, nation, or community that will practice it, on earth, or in any location within the dominions of Jehovah. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." Prov. 14: 3, 4.

2d. They who practice benevolence derive happiness from loving its practice by other moral beings. All

who practice holiness love its practice when they witness it in others. The love of holiness includes the love of happiness, and of all beings which are capable either of happiness or of both happiness and holiness, so that to love holiness includes the love of every object which is worthy of love. Holiness, as an object of love, can never come in competition with the love of any object that is worthy to be loved, because the love of holiness comprehensively includes the love of every worthy object. For these reasons, no object of love can be *superior* to holiness as a source of happiness.

Love, in all its senses, voluntary and involuntary, — love to an object implies pleasure derived in some way from that object. From the nature of mind no object can be loved which is not to the mind in some way a source of pleasure. The tendency of holiness to confer happiness upon those who love it, is that which makes it an object of the intensest interest, and of love to holy beings, who have made trial of it, and know by their own experience what it is. And this is one thing which commends benevolence to the complacential love of all rational beings. As a general rule, holiness, contemplated in others, affords as much happiness to the person who contemplates it, as he has of a voluntary, complacential love for it. "Great peace have they that love thy law." Ps. 119: 165. In the complacential, voluntary love of virtue there is a kind and degree of joy, which is not found in mere approbation of right. What this joy is, he alone who feels it knows. By the love and practice of benevolence this wide world might have been a habitation of blessedness, and all of its inhabitants might have been rendered eternally blessed and happy.

Let us now consider what bearing this view of the

tendencies of benevolence to promote happiness has upon the question,

221. Do these tendencies of benevolence belong to its moral nature?

To bring this question to a fair trial *here*, let us, as far as it is possible, suppose all these tendencies of benevolence to promote happiness to be entirely separated from it.

Separate from benevolence in thought,

(1.) Its tendency to secure the approbation of moral beings, and the feelings of peculiar happiness consequent upon that approbation.

(2.) Its tendency to make its objects happy.

(3.) Its tendency to promote the happiness of those who practice it, and exercise towards it complacential love.

Were all these tendencies to be removed from benevolence, its nature would be annihilated, and there would then be, in none of its senses, abstract or concrete, any holiness left. There would be nothing left that can be approved, and, therefore, nothing which can excite the consequent feeling of approbation, — nothing to please its beholders, nor those who practice and love it. Nothing to please God nor any holy being, — nothing left to excite in any mind a desire to practice it, nothing in its nature left in which *benevolence can be exercised*, and, therefore, there would be no possibility left that holiness should have an object, an approver, or an agent, to approve, to love, or to practice it, or to be benefited by it.

This supposition, then, if it could be and should be realized, would destroy all possibility of the existence of holiness, and all its *value*, if its existence were a possibility.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE ELEMENTS OF RIGHT AND WRONG ACTS, WHICH CONSTITUTE THEM RIGHT OR WRONG.

Having established the doctrine that no other than acts of the will can be morally right or wrong, in the light of the previous discussion, let us now consider the following question: —

222. What makes certain acts of the will right, and certain other acts of the will wrong?

Certain voluntary acts of the mind are right because, (1.) They are designed to promote the general well-being in the wisest manner, and to the highest degree in the agent's power, that is, they are benevolent. (2.) And these benevolent acts are right, because this is the rational way, and the *only* way, in which this object can be accomplished. (3.) And because this object includes every object which can be included in the ultimate end of all benevolent action, and excludes every other object. (4.) This is the right and the only right ultimate object of moral action, because happiness is the only absolute and ultimate good, and because the greatest amount of general happiness, and that which promotes and secures it includes all that belongs to and constitutes the greatest conceivable good, viz. the greatest sum total of universal holiness and happiness.

For example, you saved a drowning man's life, and you did this not by accident, but by design, and strenu-

ous effort for that end. If this act was performed in fulfilment of a supreme purpose to add as much as you can to the general happiness, then it accomplished that result, and it was right for the two reasons that it did accomplish, and was intelligently designed to accomplish, the best result in your power. The moral relation of that act to the best result in your power, consisting in the happiness produced, was, that it was the intelligently designed cause of its promotion, and this relation to the object was what made this action right, benevolent, and useful, or benevolent usefulness. It was right for the twofold reason that it was, and was designed to be, useful. By having this relation, that is, by being what it was, it was the fulfilment of obligation. That it was not useful *merely* and only because it was right, appears to be self-evident. It was the design to save which saved the man, and not the *moral* rightness of the design which saved him. If you had saved the man for a selfish purpose, he would nevertheless have been saved, but your act would not have been virtuous. Supremely selfish men save others from drowning, without performing virtuous acts.

The rationally supposed tendency of your efforts to save the man, constituted an essential element in the ground of your obligation to make those efforts. Suppose you had been standing upon the bank of Niagara, and you had seen the man going over the falls, where you would have known that all the efforts in your power would have no tendency to save him. Then this known want of tendency in any efforts within your power, would have shown that you was under no obligation to make them. For these reasons, that which makes an intention right is, that it has a right object, and a rationally supposed tendency to gain that object.

The foundation of the obligation lies in the agent's power to fulfil it, in accomplishing the object aimed at. This relation, above designated, of the intention to its object, constitutes this act of the will right, or this relation of the act is its rectitude, or rightness or adaptation, or efficacious tendency to produce, or its production of, happiness. It is no essential matter by which of these terms you designate it. It will be the same thing in substance, whatever name is given to it.

223. Why are certain acts of the will wrong?

Certain acts of the will are wrong, because they are not designed to promote the highest general good, and because they are designed to accomplish some less, lower, partial, or selfish object, and thus they wilfully hinder, rather than promote happiness, and instead thereof, produce misery. If an act be done for a less noble object, and from a lower motive than a desire to add to the general happiness, it will be selfish, and will not promote the general good, but prevent it and promote misery, and therefore it will not have that relation to the general good, which constitutes its rightness or rectitude, but it will have that relation which constitutes its wrongness, its *un*righteousness.

If we do not know an act to have either of these relations, we cannot know it to be either right or wrong. To know an act to be right, is to know it to be from the higher motive. To know it to be wrong is to know it to be from the lower motive. We must have some conception of highest good, before we can aim at it, — before we can choose between the higher and the lower good.

224. Is it certain that a design to advance the general good will accomplish that result?

Let it be remembered that our obligations are meas-

ured by our abilities. When we do all we can and in the wisest manner which our talents will admit, to advance the highest good, nothing can be morally more certain, than that the highest good will be advanced to the extent of our power. Nothing can be more certain than that supreme, impartial, universal benevolence, when exercised to the extent of our ability, will promote the general welfare.

'The objection has been made to the doctrine of utilitarians, that many right acts do not tend to highest happiness. But utilitarians have always triumphed.' By the necessity of its nature, virtue always does and always will tend to the highest universal happiness, and it will accomplish the highest amount of happiness in the agent's power, when that power is, to the extent of his obligation, exerted. To suppose that benevolence should not tend to happiness, is the supposition of a mere absurdity. Therefore, in an argument to prove that tendency to produce happiness does not belong to the nature of holiness, it does not amount to much, to say that 'benevolence is right, let it tend which way it will,' so long as it *will* tend to happiness, and so long as it forever will promote the highest happiness in the agent's power, when his obligations are fully complied with.

The certainty of this truth implies that the production of happiness belongs to the nature of virtue, and, therefore, the primary ground, cause, or reason why an act is right, is its chosen adaptation and efficacy, or its intent and tendency to promote the highest happiness in the agent's power.

225. But is it not also true, that a right act produces happiness, because it is right?

Certainly. A right act is not only right, because by design it produces highest happiness, but a right act, in

certain ways, produces some kinds of happiness, because by its design and tendency it *is* right.

(1.) The pleasant feeling of approval in those who *merely approve* of right acts, without practising them, is produced by the rightness of those acts. That benevolent acts produce *this* happiness, is an effect and an evidence of their rectitude, but the primary ground of this approbation is, that these acts were designed and thus fitted to promote highest happiness. Here, then, is an incontestable case in which right acts produce happiness, because they are right, and in consequence of their being right.

(2.) Right acts please holy beings, because those acts are right, and they are pleased in consequence of those acts being right. But the primary reason, why these acts please, is, that they were designed and fitted for the promotion of happiness. Holy beings love holiness primarily, because it is the designed promotion of happiness. And then, secondarily, it produces their happiness, and thus secures their love, or it induces them to love it, because of its original promotion of happiness.

(3.) We have seen (q. 201, ans. 2) that a right act, viewed in contemplation before it is performed, produces some happiness in the mind which excites the desire to perform it. But this happiness is produced and this desire is excited by the contemplation of the act, because the act is viewed as a design to promote, and, therefore, adapted to promote happiness.

(4.) Again; let a holy mind contemplate a holy law, —rightness in the abstract—he is pleased; his happiness is produced by this contemplation of its requirements, but the primary ground of this pleasure is, that this law requires the promotion of happiness.

(5.) Once more; the testimony of a good conscience makes a man happy, because he has performed right acts. But the primary ground of this happiness, arising from the approval of his own conscience is, that the rightness of the acts which his conscience approves, consists in their designed tendency to promote happiness.

In the light of these psychological facts, we are prepared to see the fallacy of the first part of the following statement, and the truth of the last part of it, "that a right act is not right because it produces happiness, but it produces happiness because it is right;" inasmuch as an act is right originally, because it designedly promotes highest happiness, and secondarily, it promotes happiness because it is right. The truth denied in the above statement is of *primary* importance, while that asserted is only of secondary importance.

The eternal, universal, immutable, and indestructible law of moral action requires every moral agent to promote as much happiness as he can, by the wisest and best use of all his powers. Every act of obedience which fulfils what this law requires, is right. Its rightness or rectitude consists in its conformity or fitness to the law, or its agreeableness to the truth implied or contained in the law. This law requires its subjects to act according to *their* nature and relations to each other. The binding power, the obligation of this law, is therefore founded in the power of its subjects to obey it, or in their power to promote happiness.

When benevolence entirely fulfils this law, it is right, and its rightness consists in being what it is, that is, in being what the law requires. And it *is* the intelligent, voluntary, designed promotion of the highest happiness in our power, when it is a complete fulfilment of obligation.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE IDEA OF RIGHT NOT A SIMPLE IDEA.

It is claimed that right, rightness, rectitude, virtuousness, or holiness, is a simple and not a complex idea, and that it is a necessary and not a contingent idea, and therefore the doctrine of benevolent utility is erroneous, because, according to it, right is a complex and a contingent idea. In proof that the doctrine of benevolent utility does not imply that the idea of holiness or rectitude is a contingent idea, (see q. 7); and here it needs no further proof, if we consider that this doctrine is founded in the unoriginated, independent, eternal, and *necessary* principle of right.

If the doctrine of benevolent utility makes virtuousness a complex idea, be it so. We know not what else, in any way, to make of it, without sacrificing the truth.

If those who differ from us think they can form a correct conception of holiness in the abstract, as a simple idea, we are ready to concede that their views might be very harmless, if it could be proved that they do not lead to false conceptions of what moral acts should be, to be right. As we have already intimated, if we can form and maintain just views of what are right acts, of what virtue is in the concrete, our view of the abstract quality may be comparatively harmless. But the danger is, that false conceptions of the abstract will lead to false ideas of right action.

Let us, then, carefully consider the question,

226. Is the idea of rectitude, or right, as the quality of an act, a simple idea?

To prepare the way to answer this question, it may be expedient here to explain, as best we may, the terms moral rightness, morally right.

227. What, then, is the true idea of moral rightness, or of morally right?

A true and full answer to *this* question would be embraced in a correct answer to the *six* following questions, although these may not be entirely distinct from each other.

(1.) What is the *first* rule, principle, or *primary* law of right action? or, to present precisely the same question in a different form, according to a different order of viewing the subject, What is the fundamental, *ultimate* rule of holy action? (2.) In what does the rightness of this law consist? (3.) What are right moral acts? (4.) In what does the rightness of right moral acts consist? (5.) Why are such acts right? (6.) Why is the law right, in requiring the promotion of happiness as the ultimate final good?

228. (1.) What is the *first* rule, principle, or *primary* law of right action, or, viewed in the reversed order, the *ultimate* rule of right action?

The first rule, principle, or law of right action, as distinguished from all irresistible, physical, natural necessity, is that kind of necessity or requisiteness which imperatively requires and obligates rational, sentient, and voluntary beings to promote happiness, their own and that of others in general, to the extent of their power. According to the reversed order, this is the *ultimate* rule of right.

229. (2.) In what does the rightness of the law consist?

The rightness of the law consists: 1st. In its perfect adaptation to the rational, sentient, and voluntary powers of moral agents, according to their several, individual abilities; 2d. In its immediately demanding only that which is voluntary; 3d. In its demanding of moral agents those voluntary actions, which would promote their own highest happiness; 4th. And the highest happiness of others possible by the best use of their powers, — thus requiring the promotion of the greatest and the only possible, absolute, and ultimate good.

230. (3.) What are right moral acts?

Those acts are right in which a moral agent intelligently and purposely promotes the greatest sum total of happiness in his power, including his own highest happiness and that of others; or, those acts are right in which the agent intelligently and purposely obeys the law which requires him to promote his own highest happiness, and that of others in general, as he has opportunity. The law which requires a man to love his neighbor as himself, requires him to promote the greatest happiness of himself and others that is in his power; and those acts are right in which he purposely does this.

231. (4.) In what does the rightness of right moral acts consist?

The rightness or holiness of right moral acts consists in their being what the law requires, — in their intelligent, purposed, voluntary fitness or conformity to the fundamental law of eternal right requiring moral beings to promote their own highest happiness and that of others.

232. (5.) Why are such acts right?

These acts just described are right, because they are what they are, 1st, intelligent; 2d, voluntary conform-

ity to the law of right; 3d, requiring the promotion of the greatest sum of the public good; 4th, including our own, which to us is possible. These acts are right in making happiness their ultimate object, because no voluntary action is possible to a rational being, which does not have happiness for its ultimate, final object.

It is *right* that the greatest amount and extent of happiness should be the ultimate end of holy action, because this happiness is a greater good than any less sum, and because the greatest good of the *whole* is greater and more valuable than any conceivable good of a part.

233. Why cannot the soul's worthiness, nor holiness itself, be the ultimate object of holy action?

Neither the soul's worthiness, nor holiness itself, can be the ultimate object of holy action, because, in their own essential nature, both the soul's worthiness and holiness must have objects ulterior to themselves. Holy action is voluntary, and therefore *must* have an object ulterior to itself. By no other action can the soul's worthiness be obtained. If the soul's worthiness had in itself no tendency to excite the desire of happiness, nor *ultimately* to promote in any way the gratification of that desire in any moral being, then, to act for the soul's worthiness would be to every moral being an absolute and an eternal impossibility.

234. (6.) Why is the *law right* in requiring the promotion of *happiness* as the ultimate good, and of the *highest* happiness as the highest ultimate good?

The law is right, because it is what it is. It is right in requiring the promotion of happiness as the only absolute and ultimate good, because happiness is the only possible or conceivable ultimate or absolute good. The law is right in requiring the promotion of *highest*

happiness, because highest happiness is the greatest ultimate good which can be promoted, and therefore no other greater ultimate good can be righteously required. Happiness is the only thing and the only good which is or can be the ultimate final object and end of any and of all voluntary action, and is therefore the only possible end in which holy action can terminate; and, for all these reasons, the law is *right* in requiring the promotion of highest *happiness* as the ultimate final end of holy action. This, we conclude, is the true and last answer which can properly be given to the last question which can with propriety be raised on this topic.

To ask why holy action does, and why it must, terminate in the only possible *end* in which it can terminate, seems like asking why any thing is what it is, and why it must be what it must be; e. g. why two are and must be two, and not ten.

235. What is the difference between the rightness of a righteous *law*, and the rightness of a right moral *act?*

The rectitude of a righteous *law* consists in rightly requiring right acts, which consist in doing what the law requires. The rightness or rectitude of a right *act* consists in its being obedience to a righteous law. The rightness of the act consists in its being what it is, viz. that intelligent intent having a tendency to promote one's own highest happiness, and that of others in general; while the intent is to place the individual's happiness, in promoting the general happiness as the supreme, ultimate object.

236. Is the idea of the first principle or ultimate rule of right action a simple idea?

The first principle or law of right action is that requisiteness which imperatively obligates a rational, sen-

tient, voluntary being intelligently and voluntarily to promote his own highest happiness, by promoting the greatest sum of general happiness in his power.

The idea of obligating a rational, sentient, voluntary being to perform an intelligent, voluntary, moral act, consisting of an intent having a tendency to promote one's own highest happiness, by promoting the general good, seems to be a very complex idea, composed of many simpler elementary ideas.

237. Is a right act a simple or complex object of thought?

An act in which the law of right action is fully obeyed, is, 1st, the intelligent, 2d, the voluntary promotion, 3d, of the greatest general good, 4th, including the agent's highest happiness. We are compelled, therefore, to conclude that a right act is a complex object, consisting of at least four elements, a true conception of which must be a complex conception or idea. All this can be neither psychologically nor morally a simple, but is a complex thing, and, for this reason, a true idea of a morally right act must be a complex idea. A correct idea of a complex object cannot be a simple idea.

How many simpler ideas may be found as elements in the complex idea of a right act, must depend in some degree upon the minuteness to which the analysis is carried.

238. Is the true idea of the rightness of the moral law a simple or a complex idea?

The rightness of the law, as we have just seen (q. 229), consists in at least four particulars or elements. An adequate idea of the rightness of this law must, therefore, embrace a distinct idea of each of these four elements, which would constitute a complex idea.

Should it be said, in objection to this, the rightness of the law consists of that in the law which excites the feeling of approbation, and therefore the idea of it is a simple idea; it may be said, in reply, the rightness of the law is a complex object, and therefore the idea of it must be a complex idea.

239. Is the true idea of the rightness of a right act a simple or a complex idea?

A right act we have seen is a complex object, consisting of various elements. And the rightness of the act consists in the fitness or conformity of the various elements of this complex object, to the various elements of a complex law.

From the previous discussions, the inference appears to be fully authorized, that the idea of rightness, as a quality of moral acts, is not a simple, but a complex idea.

To give a short and comprehensive statement of the argument, derived from this analysis.

A right act must be the act of a rational, sentient, voluntary agent, in obedience to a known law requiring that agent to promote the happiness of himself and others to the greatest extent in his power. If an act must be all this, to have the quality of rightness; if it must be the act of such an agent; if it must be an intelligent, voluntary act, in conformity to known law requiring it to be done to promote the agent's happiness and that of others; if an act, to be right, must have all these elements, each of which is essential to its rightness, how an idea of this rightness can be a simple idea, is more than our understanding can comprehend. It cannot be denied that a right act must be qualified, 1st, by being an intelligent act of a moral agent; 2d, by being voluntary conformity to known law requiring

such an intent as, 3d, has a tendency to promote both the general happiness, and, 4th, the happiness of the agent to the extent of his power.

If an act is destitute of either of these elements or qualities, it cannot be right. A rightness consisting of several elements, and these at least four in number, viz., 1st, intelligent; 2d, voluntary intent and tendency; 3d, to promote general happiness; and, 4th, to promote the agent's happiness, cannot be a simple object, nor the idea of it a simple idea.

If an act be destitute of either of these just specified qualities, it cannot gain the approbation of an intelligent conscience. Although it may be truly said, that virtue is that which excites the feeling of approbation, this does not imply that that which excites the feeling of approbation is not a complex object, as that which deserves approbation *must* be.

240. What appropriate answer can be given to the argument to prove that right is a simple idea, arising from the fact that right is that which excites the feeling of approbation?

Should it be said that the rightness of a right act is that in the right act which excites the feeling of approbation, and therefore the idea of that rightness must be a simple idea; it may be said, in reply, *That* in the right act which excites this feeling, is complex in its nature, and therefore the idea of it must be complex.

To say that virtue, as a quality, is that which excites the feeling of approbation, gives no information at all of what that is which does or should excite this feeling. This is the very thing which we want to know, — the all-important thing for us to understand. What that is which conscience approves, by this saying we are not

informed, only it is that indefinite, indefinable something which excites certain feelings.

That virtue is strictly thus indefinable, a class of moral philosophers claim. But to *maintain* this, they must *prove* that no reason can be given why virtue excites these feelings; that no statement can be made; that no description can be given of what that is in virtuous acts which excites these feelings.

And then it must follow that approbation, instead of being a perception of the intellect and understanding, is a mere blind feeling of the sensibility, since sensibility cannot see, and therefore it must be utterly incompetent to discriminate moral quality. And then it would follow, that we cannot tell and do not know why we approve one thing rather than another, and that we cannot even tell what that quality is which we do approve. It would also follow, that we do not know what that quality is which distinguishes a virtuous act from one which is not virtuous, nor what that is which distinguishes a sinful act from one which is not sinful. A sentiment thus terminating in absurdity must be erroneous. And then, if you ask him who takes this ground, why he is bound to be benevolent, he has no reason which he can give.

To state the argument in another form, —

Holiness, in the concrete, in all its modes, as we have seen, is reducible to the intelligent, free, voluntary choice by a moral agent, of promoting, as he has power and opportunity, the highest *happiness* of himself and of sentient beings in general, on account of, and in proportion (according to the best practical estimate of that proportion) to, its worth, as consisting in the total sum, and as made up of the various parts according to their *estimable* value.

This is virtue in the concrete. All this must be where virtue is. Here, as before, appear to be at least four elements essential to the abstract rightness of the act, without which a virtuous act cannot be performed.

(1.) The act must have the quality of being dictated by intelligence. Intelligence is not only *pre*requisite, but corequisite, during the time the act is performed, and as indispensably requisite to guide in its performance as to point out the duty before its performance. Without this element the act cannot have the virtuous quality.

(2.) The virtuous act must have the quality of being free, voluntary intention. *Mere* utility, mere production of happiness, not designed or chosen, cannot be virtuous. The act producing happiness must be the free, voluntary, intentional production of that happiness, or it will be destitute of one essential element of rectitude, — of rightness as an abstract quality of a moral act.

(3.) The design of the virtuous act must be qualified by aiming to promote the general happiness, — it must be "good-will to being in general," because, 1st, in a virtuous act regard must be had to the greatest good, and the general is greater than any private good, or the good of a part, however great that part may be; 2d, the law of right requires supreme regard to the general and highest good, because this includes an appropriate regard to the good of the various parts. A regard for the general good, of course, includes a regard for our own, as a part of the general good. This regard for the general good, also, then, is an essential element in the quality of a virtuous act which renders it virtuous.

(4.) The design must be qualified by aiming to produce the *agent's* happiness, because it is impossible to

act voluntarily without that design. An act which the agent esteems and knows to be destitute of all tendency to produce his own happiness, is to him an impossibility. And this impossibility consists in the entire want of power to perform a voluntary act, for which there is no possible subjective motive. The agent's *highest* happiness must be designed in a virtuous act, because to act for a less, in preference to a greater good, is not virtuous.

For these reasons, the agent's highest happiness must be the ultimate *subjective* object of all his virtuous acts. Therefore, this quality is an essential element in the rightness of a moral act. Therefore again, any act known to be inconsistent with the agent's highest happiness, it cannot be his duty to perform. Duty never does, — never can require us to sacrifice our own highest eternal good. There can be no *rational* motive of any kind to do so.

All virtuous self-denial is giving up a less for a greater good in the end. If the agent's choice be of a less, rather than the known or reasonably supposed greatest good to himself, perceived by him to be in his power, that choice will be sinful, because he is under obligation to choose the greater, and, thus to do as much good as he can. Here we have, again, four essential elements of rightness in the abstract.

241. What is Prof. Hickok's argument to prove that right is a simple idea?

In proof that virtue is not founded in utility, some ethical philosophers have been satisfied to *affirm* that the conception of right is a simple idea, supposing, perhaps, that their statements were sufficiently evident to need no confirmation by argument. Others have attempted to prove that the conception of right is a

simple idea, uncompounded of simpler ideas, and, therefore, incapable of analysis, or of a logical or real definition.

We notice the following by Prof. Hickok. "No intellectual process can decompose and show its parts. It may be said, as it has been, that for any action to be right there must be; 1st. Understanding; 2d. Free-will; 3d. Tendency to universal happiness; 4th. Tendency to the individual happiness. But though this should be admitted to be a true analysis of right action, it is manifestly a mistake to suppose it an analysis of right itself. The very first ingredient — an understanding — is of no possible use but as it is conditional for already perceiving the right. Besides, how know that it would be not right to hold to responsibility without such assumed elements? The very attempt at analysis convicts itself of carrying along with it the still simple conception." — Moral Science, pp. 53, 54.

242. How can this argument be disposed of? Why would it not be right to hold to responsibility without the assumed elements supposed?

Reply. (1.) If it be admitted (and we see not how it can be reasonably denied), that *this* as far it goes, is a true analysis of a right act, and that each of these assumed elements is essential to its rightness, as they all very evidently are, then it follows, that right itself must have in its complex nature, at least these four elements in order to be right, because, if either of these elements of the act be wanting, no moral rightness can remain.

(2.) Understanding or intelligence is not only *prerequisite* for perceiving the right, but it is of indispensable use to guide during the performance of duty. A man can no more act virtuously, without the exercise

of his intelligence, than he can without the exercise of his will. So that a moral act to be right must be qualified by the intelligent element, not only as a prerequisite, but as a corequisite during the performance of duty.

(3.) We know it would not be right to hold to responsibility without such assumed elements, because this would prevent happiness, and produce an increase of misery, — it would do no good, but immeasurable hurt, — an inconceivable amount of evil.

(4.) If this "attempt at analysis convicts itself of carrying along with it the still simple conception," the evidence of it is so recondite that it lies concealed from the utmost stretch of our apprehension. We cannot see how this attempt thus convicts itself, any more than every other attempt at analysis of any thing must do the same, and that is not at all.

Now, therefore, whether a complete and adequate idea of the rightness of a moral act can be formed without a distinct idea of these elements, and whether this idea, when formed, will be a simple idea, we submit to the judgment of every candid reader.

Therefore, also, we claim that the doctrine of benevolent utility and rectitude is maintained, and is free from any objection, arising from the fact that it implies that the true conception of rectitude is a complex idea, having the essential elements, 1st. of intelligent, 2d, voluntary intent and purposed tendency, 3d, to promote universal happiness, 4th, including the happiness of the virtuous agent.

CHAPTER XXIII.

RECAPITULATION. — RECONCILIATION OF THEORIES. — SIN NOT THE BEST MEANS OF GOOD. — NECESSITY OF DEFINITE VIEWS OF LAW.

243. DOES the foregoing definition of holiness exclude every thing that does not belong to the nature of holiness?

(1.) The previous definition of holiness as voluntary action excludes from it all created substances, both of matter and mind, and all their created natures, qualities, and properties of every kind, in short, every *created* thing. It excludes all things that are what they are by the necessity of nature and independent of all causation, as there is no power in the universe to the contrary.

(2.) Virtue, as an act of a rational being, excludes all acts of irrational beings, and of beings who have not the possession and legitimate use of their rational faculties, so that they can distinguish moral good and evil.

(3.) As a voluntary, moral act, it excludes all mere acts of the intellect, all states and exercises of the sensibilities, all acts necessitated by a natural necessity, and all involuntary acts and states of every kind. The mere feeling of approbation is a state of the sensibility, and, therefore, not virtue. Perfectly sinful beings approve of virtue: —

> "Abash'd the Devil stood,
> And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
> Virtue, in her shape O how lovely, saw, and pin'd
> His loss."
>
> *Milton*, *Paradise Lost*, book 4. 846.

For the same reason, happiness of all kinds and degrees is excluded by its own nature, being a state of the sensibility, from partaking at all (in the strictest sense) of the nature of holiness.

(4.) *Mere* tendency to happiness is not virtue, for that is a quality which belongs to created things.

Mere production of happiness, mere usefulness, is not virtue. All useful things produce happiness more or less.

Mere interest is not virtue. Our interest includes every thing that is conducive to our happiness, and, of course, many created things, all our possessions, but possessions are not duty.

(5.) Neither beauty, grandeur, nor sublimity, is virtue. These are qualities of created and material things.

(6.) *Mere* prudence and expediency are not virtues. Many actions are performed because they are prudent or expedient, and not because they are right. No external action, no executive volition, no specific volition, which does not involve or spring from the impartial choice of the highest good, is virtue.

(7.) Intelligence or knowledge is not virtue. Perfectly sinful beings have intelligence, but this is a phenomenon of the intellect, and therefore is neither virtue nor sin. There may be an intelligent act performed for a known reason, and not be virtue. Men know why they sin.

Mere voluntariness is not virtue. There may be intelligent, voluntary production of less instead of

greater happiness. These three *elements* thus combined are sin, and thus combined they are excluded by our definition from holiness.

Our definition excludes from virtue all choice of happiness to be obtained, for ourselves or others, by selfish or partial love. It excludes all preference of the less and inferior, to the greater good. It excludes all voluntary action, which is inconsistent with the highest and eternal good of the individual. It excludes all choice of any supposed good of any part of God's creatures, that is inconsistent with, or in opposition to, the greatest good of all intelligent beings.

Therefore, this definition excludes every thing that is not needful and indispensable by the intrinsic tendencies of its nature, for the highest possible good of all intelligent beings.

(8.) Wherever and whenever benevolence or virtue exists, which fulfils the law to the full extent of its demands, there is intelligent, intentional production of the highest happiness within the agent's power.

Wherever intelligence, voluntariness, and production of highest happiness are thus combined, they constitute virtue. Wherever this combination of these elements is, virtue is. Wherever the intelligent, voluntary intent, having a tendency to produce the greatest good, is wanting, no virtue can be found.

Intelligence and voluntariness which produce only unintended or selfishly intended happiness are not virtue, and by our definition are excluded. Many intelligent, voluntary actions in some of their relations produce happiness, and are in these relations useful, which by our definition are excluded from holiness; e. g. all those actions which are prompted by no higher principle than natural affection, neighborly kindness,

humanity, patriotism, or even philanthropy, without regard to God, are not holiness.

Thus it is seen that the foregoing definition and discussion of the nature of holiness, exclude from it every conceivable act and thing, except impartial and universal benevolence, and those actions in which this benevolence is exercised, or which are dictated by it, or spring from it.

244. Does this definition include every thing which belongs to virtue?

According to the definition in question, universal, perfect, and permanent holiness includes all that can be *done* by all intelligent, rational beings, to promote the highest amount of *happiness* and *holiness* of every *individual*, and of *all* intelligent beings, that is possible for *each* and *all* to do, by the best use of all their powers.

The highest possible benevolence of each and all, towards each and all intelligent beings, united with a proper regard to the welfare of sentient animals, includes all that belongs to virtue in the highest possible degree of it.

This includes all that can be wisely done to promote the happiness and holiness of the universe. Now, if all this were done, it would be the production of the highest possible amount of holiness and happiness in God's dominions.

If we have accomplished what we have attempted, then this definition of virtue or holiness *ex*cludes every thing that does not belong to it, and *in*cludes all which does belong to it, and therefore is a true, full, and correct definition. Whether our arguments amount to a moral demonstration of the main points of the definition, we submit to the judgment of our readers.

245. Does this doctrine of benevolent rectitude and utility establish a foundation on which the various theories, so far as they are founded in truth, can be reconciled?

Our answer to this question is embraced in the answers to the twelve next following questions.

246. Does virtue consist in the fitness of moral acts to the nature and relations of moral beings, and to the nature of things?

One theory is that virtue is agreeableness to, or founded in, the nature of things.

According to the doctrine of benevolent rectitude, that fitness of benevolence to the nature and relations of moral beings, and to the nature of such things as can be wisely used to promote happiness, which renders it intentionally productive of highest happiness, is the quality which constitutes its rectitude, — its virtuousness. (See q. 107.)

According to the doctrine of benevolent rectitude,

247. In what sense is virtue conformity to the spirit's worthiness?

Nothing of a moral nature but benevolence, or seeking to accomplish the highest good, is worthy of a rational, immortal spirit. 'Act worthy of the spirit's highest excellence,' is a good, though not the ultimate rule, and, rightly followed, will lead to the same results as obedience to the law of benevolence, because nothing but true benevolence in moral action is worthy of the rational spirit. The object of an intention is what characterizes it. And no object short of highest general happiness is worthy of supreme pursuit by the soul of man.

Since highest general happiness must be the ultimate object of holy action, the law which requires the best

promotion of that object, must be the ultimate rule and law of rectitude.

248. In what sense can virtue be said to be obedience to the truth?

The *truth* is, that benevolence alone is adapted to promote the highest good. Benevolence, therefore, is obedience to this truth. All right action is obedience to this truth. But *not all* obedience to truth of whatever kind is right action. Let it be a known truth, that a tree is about to fall where a man is standing, and the greatest sinner in the world will obey that truth if he can, and make his escape. But *this* obedience to truth is not virtue.

249. In what sense is virtue agreeableness to the order of things?

Virtue is agreeableness to that order of things which the rule of righteousness requires. And that is, that moral beings shall promote as much happiness as they can. When they do this, the most delightful moral order and harmony prevail.

250. According to the true utilitarian doctrine, what is the moral sense?

The only moral sense which in reality belongs to the human mind, according to the view maintained in this treatise, is that intellectual power of perceiving what intentions are adapted to promote the highest happiness, united with the mind's susceptibility of emotion in view of right and wrong action.

251. According to the doctrine of benevolent utility, Why are the will and commands of God right?

The will and commands of God are right, because they require of men obedience to the eternal law of right, viz., to promote the highest happiness in their power. Doing this is pleasing God, obeying his will

and commands, and honoring him in his authority as moral governor of the universe, and, therefore, promoting his glory in the highest possible degree.

252. According to the doctrine that benevolence is holiness, Why are men under obligation to obey the law of eternal right?

Men are under obligation to obey the eternal law of right, because that law requires of them the best use of their powers to promote general happiness. *Moral obligation is that necessity, or requisiteness which moral beings are under to promote the greatest amount of general happiness in their power.* The foundation of their obligation consists in their *power to promote happiness.* And the last reason which can be given why we are under obligation to aim at the promotion of the highest happiness is, that the wisest aim, of which we are capable, to promote the highest happiness in our power, will promote the highest good.

253. Is the theory of reciprocal sympathy taught by Dr. Adam Smith reconcilable with the utilitarian theory?

This theory is thus stated by its author: "When the original passions of the person principally concerned are in perfect concord with the sympathetic emotions of the spectator, they necessarily appear to this last as just and proper; and, on the contrary, when, upon bringing the case home to himself, he finds they do not coincide with what he feels, they necessarily appear to him unjust and improper, and unsuitable to the causes which excite them" (Moral Sentiments, part i. ch. 3), and it amounts to this, what an impartial spectator feels to be right is right; or what sound reason and an enlightened conscience regard as right is right. Although this does not show exactly what virtue is, in the end it leads, in

our judgment, to substantially the same results as the doctrine of benevolent utility. It does this, because man is so constituted as naturally to approve, and to sympathize with the benevolent design to promote happiness. The principal objections to this theory seem to be: 1st. That it is too indirect to be regarded as the natural process of coming to the knowledge of good and evil, right and wrong; 2d. Although, according to this theory as developed by its author, happiness is the ultimate object of virtue, it does not make it sufficiently manifest that the *greatest general* happiness is the ultimate object of virtue. The third objection to this theory which we notice is, what has been a very great and a very common fault in the various theories of morality, viz. that it fails to distinguish between the involuntary feelings, passions, and emotions of the sensibility, and the intentions, or voluntary acts, or acts of the will.

According to Dr. Smith, the different accounts which have been given of the nature of virtue may be reduced to three classes. First. That the virtuous temper of mind consists in the proper government of all our affections, which may be either virtuous or vicious, according to the objects which they pursue and the degree of vehemence with which they pursue them, and, therefore, virtue consists in propriety. To this class Dr. Smith belongs.

According to the second class, virtue consists in the judicious pursuit of our own private interest and happiness, or in aiming solely at this end, and, therefore, virtue consists in prudence. Highest *imprudence* rather.

A third class, according to the same author, makes virtue consist in those affections only which aim at the

happiness of others, and not in those which aim at our own. (Ibid. part ii. § 2.)

It seems very manifest, that the *propriety* of moral character, in which virtue consists, includes the judicious pursuit of our own highest interest and happiness in connection with, and in subordination to, the greatest general good. So that Dr. Smith's theory, fairly understood and explained, embraces all that is true in the two other classes of views of the nature of virtue he has named, and the three classes of theories properly explained and united in one view contain the four actual elements of virtuous action; viz. (1.) the intelligent, (2.) voluntary pursuit, (3.) of individual, (4.) and of general well-being.

An insuperable objection to the second class of views above named is, that they, in appearance if not in reality, exclude the great and ultimate object of virtue, viz. the general well-being, and so terminate in selfishness, under the name of prudence. An insuperable objection to the third class of views of the nature of virtue is, that these exclude all regard for the individual agent's own happiness, and thus would make virtuous action an impossibility, in the unchangeable nature of moral agents. And thus these views make benevolence to be *dis*interested, i. e. so devoid of interest to the agent, that to feel any motive or to take any interest in the performance of such benevolent acts would be a contradiction, an absurdity, and an absolute impossibility to any moral agent in the universe.

From all this the conclusion is evident, that if we take the truth aimed at in each and all of these three classes of views, properly explained and united in one view, then we have the doctrine of benevolent rectitude, as set forth in the foregoing inquiry.

254. Are right and wrong objects of immediate intuition?

As to the theory said to be held by Coleridge, Kant, and Cudworth, that right and wrong are objects of immediate intuition by the reason, it may be regarded as correct (whether they held it or not), so far as it implies that the principle, "We ought to promote as much happiness as we can," intuitively commends itself to the reason of men, as soon as they fairly understand it.

255. Is virtue the agreeableness of a moral act, to the end for which man was made?

If, in the first place, the fact is established, that to enjoy and to promote in others the happiness which results from holiness, is the end for which man was made, then our virtue must consist in acting agreeably to that end. Acting agreeably to that end is identical with impartial, universal benevolence.

256. What evidence have we, that the happiness which results from holiness is the end for which man was made?

First. Man is so constituted that he must, by the absolute necessity of his nature, seek his own happiness in all the voluntary actions which he performs. In all the voluntary actions which he can perform, his personal happiness must be his ultimate subjective object, not of choice, but by necessity.

The desire of happiness is the subjective motive by which he must be moved in all possible voluntary moral action.

Secondly. Man is so made that he can obtain his highest happiness in no other way than by the practice of holiness. He can obtain his highest interest and happiness for eternity only by doing all he wisely can to promote the highest happiness in his power, of all

other intelligent beings, in addition to his own, so far as they may be known or supposed to come within the reach of his influence. If man was made so that he must seek happiness, undoubtedly he was made that he might seek it in that way in which he can obtain and promote the highest degree of it. Therefore,

That man might gain his highest happiness in the enjoyment of God, by honoring him in all his authority, — by holiness, or, which is the same thing, by promoting the general happiness, — is the chief end for which he was made. To do this was the chief end for which every moral being was made, that *was* made.

The consummate skill with which our intellectual and moral constitution is adapted to promote highest happiness, by benevolent action, proves, beyond the possibility of a reasonable doubt, that such was the chief end of our creation. There is no better evidence that a timepiece was made to keep time, than that man was made that he might be happy by promoting happiness, or by being holy.

"We hope there is nobody but will admit that the end of God, in creating man, was to render him happy." — Burlamaqui on Law, p. 14.

257. What *relation*, then, has moral obligation to the *end* for which man was created?

Moral obligation is *that* necessity which man is under to fulfil, for himself and for others, the end for which he was made.

"If it be true that the world has an end, it is equally true that this end is absolutely good. If it be true that each being has a special end, then it is true that the good proper to this being is this end. Again; if it be true that between the end of each being and the end of all there is a correlation, so that the end of each being

is only an element of the end of all, then it is true that the good of each being is an element of absolute good, and that thus the end of each being has the same nature and the same value as absolute good itself. Now, to what is the idea of obligation inevitably attached? To that which is a good in itself absolutely. What we *were* ignorant of, we now know; we have a clear conception of it. Good in itself is no other thing than the end of God in creation, — than the absolute end of things." — Jouffroy's Theory of Morals, Walker's Ap. to Stewart.

258. What inference necessarily follows from this view of virtue, and its relation to the chief end of man?

The necessary inference from this view of holiness, and its relation to the chief end of man, is, that it is the supreme desire of God that all moral beings should secure their highest happiness by holiness in all circumstances, rather than by sin in any possible circumstances. So far, then, as men should practice the benevolence which we have described, if it were to the extent of perfect and universal and perpetual holiness, they would act according to the supreme choice and will of God, as revealed in our moral constitution and in his Word. This implies that glorious truth thus expressed by the Westminster divines: "Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever." This is the end for which man was made, and this is the end for which he ought to live and labor as the supreme end of his being. And, of course, sin is *not*, but holiness *is*, the necessary means of the greatest good.

259. What advantages, may we here conclude, are to be derived from having clear, distinct, and correct views of moral obligation and moral law?

Moral obligation, in the form of moral law, correctly

understood, is a rule of duty which points out the true and only way in which a moral being can secure his own highest interests, and accomplish the greatest possible amount of good for others, and thus fulfil the end for which God gave him being. A clear, correct, and permanent perception of such a law would be the best schoolmaster to guide us to Christ. While doing this, it would also serve as a chart and compass through the voyage of life to the haven of everlasting rest. Such a knowledge of such a law might enable us to pilot multitudes of our fellow men through the same voyage to the blissful shores of heaven.

That the doctrine of benevolent utility and rectitude so evidently includes whatever of truth is embraced in the different theories of virtue, is no small confirmation of its correctness, of its correspondence with essential truth.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE DIFFERENT NATURES, TENDENCIES, AND RESULTS OF HOLINESS AND SIN.

260. WHAT can be affirmed alike of both holiness and sin? In what respects are they alike?

Holiness and sin are prompted both alike by the subjective desire of happiness. They are alike in having happiness of some kind and degree as their ultimate object, and in being intelligent, free, voluntary acts of rational moral agents.

261. In what respects are holiness and sin unlike, and what is the difference?

(1.) Holiness is obedience to, and sin is transgression of, law.

(2.) Holiness, in all instances, is reducible to the choice, purpose, intention, or free, voluntary action of a rational moral being, in which he complies with known obligation, and obeys a known law which requires supreme, universal, and impartial benevolence, or the production of the greatest sum of general happiness in his power.

(3.) All sin is reducible to the choice, purpose, intention, or free voluntary action of a moral agent, in which he violates known or knowable obligation, and transgresses the known or knowable law of universal benevolence, or the eternal principle of right, which forbids all selfishness.

(4.) Holiness is supreme, impartial, and universal benevolence. (5.) Sin is supreme selfishness, supreme regard to partial good, to the less rather than the greatest good.

(6.) Holiness implies the denial of our desires of the less, for the sake of the greater, good. (7.) Sin implies seeking self-gratification by the less, instead of the greater, good. (8.) As benevolence is the principle which comprehends all holiness; so *selfishness* is the fountain, main-spring, or comprehensive embodiment of all sin.

(9.) Since desire of happiness comprehends all possible subjective motive for voluntary action, right or wrong, the holy and benevolent, in order to be benevolent, must gratify their desires for happiness by promoting the happiness of others, they must place their happiness in the general good. When others are happy, they will feel it.

The selfish and sinful try to gratify their desires of happiness, and they succeed to some extent, by seeking

selfish, partial, worldly good. Since all, as a matter of absolute necessity, and not of choice, must seek their own happiness in all they do (q. 114), the virtuous do seek theirs, so far as they are virtuous, in the right way, — by holiness, as all are morally bound to do, while the selfish seek theirs in the wrong. One class seek happiness by holiness, the other by sin. One class where they can gain their highest happiness, and the other where they cannot.

(10.) In the exercise of perfect holiness, a man would regard the greatest happiness of all rational and sentient beings, and the necessary means of that happiness, including holiness, as the supreme good; and he would prefer and choose that good, so far as it is in his power, rather than any thing that can come in competition with it. So far as men are holy, they seek their own, in subordination to, and in promotion of, the general good.

(11.) In sin a man practically regards his own gratification as the supreme good, in disregard of his own best good, and the best good of all others within his knowledge. Sometimes he may make the partial good of some others subservient to his own.

(12.) The supreme object of benevolence is the best good of the universe, including the greatest sum total of holiness and happiness. (13.) The supreme object of selfishness is self-gratification. Selfishness prefers and seeks that gratification which may be derived from partial good, rather than that which can be obtained from the general and supreme good. For example, that gratification which a man obtains from the temporal welfare of his family, friends, or country, no matter how large the *part* is. So long as a part is less than the whole, and the good of a part is less than the good of

the whole, for that reason and no other, it will be sin to prefer and seek the gratification derived from the less good of a part, rather than that which may be derived from the supreme and universal good.

The selfish man places his happiness either exclusively in his fancied interests, or in those of a part. He chooses the less, the inferior instead of the greater. In this his sin consists.

(14.) The benevolent man places and seeks his happiness in the greatest happiness of all within his knowledge and influence. In this *his virtuousness* consists.

(15.) A man in his selfishness rejects the greatest good which is in his power to obtain for himself and to promote for others, and chooses the less and inferior pleasure in preference to that higher good. And for the sake of the inferior pleasure he sacrifices the highest good.

(16.) In the exercise of benevolence a man chooses the highest good and rejects the less and inferior, which is in competition with the greater. By holiness, moral beings may fulfil the end for which they were made. (17.) By sin, the full accomplishment of the end, for which those moral beings who commit it were made, is prevented.

(18.) Holiness fulfils the supreme will and pleasure of God, glorifies and honors him in all his authority, by promoting the greatest happiness of his intelligent kingdom. "As the glory of God, and the greatest happiness of the system of the universe, and even of the created system, mutually imply each other; whenever I mention either of them, I wish to be understood to include in my meaning the other also." — Dr. Edwards's Works, vol. i. p. 121.

(19.) Sin dishonors God, resists his will, and violates

his law, which is holy, just, and good, and tramples his will, his laws, authority, and government in the dust, and prevents the greatest good.

262. What, then, is the nature, and the necessary, inevitable tendency of virtue?

When moral acts entirely fulfil the demands of moral obligation, they necessarily and inevitably promote happiness to the greatest extent in the virtuous agent's power.

As a matter of fact, virtue is a cheerful, joyous purpose to secure the highest happiness of ourselves and others. The nature and tendency of this purpose is to secure its object, full as much as it is the nature and tendency of any purpose to promote and secure its object. And when virtue is the entire fulfilment of the law, it is as sure, if not more certain, to accomplish its object, than any other purpose is.

263. What, then, must be the nature and tendency of sin, the antagonist of virtue?

As we have seen, and as a common matter of fact, sin is a purpose to secure one's own temporal happiness, including, it may be, that of a few friends or even of his country, without regard, or in opposition, to his and their eternal happiness, and the general well-being. Its nature and tendency is to accomplish the greatest misery of the sinner, and of the whole universe. And this result would be accomplished if this tendency of sin were not thwarted by Omnipotent holiness.

The *designed* nature and tendency of holiness is to promote the greatest possible amount of eternal and universal happiness; while the *real* nature and tendency of sin is to prevent highest happiness, and to promote the greatest amount of universal and eternal misery.

Holiness is the highest wisdom conceivable. Sin is consummate folly.

264. What, then, is holiness which sin is not?

Holiness, when it is a complete fulfilment of the agent's obligations, is the designed and actual production, by moral action, of the highest happiness in his power. The qualities of that act which constitute its holiness, are its relations to the happiness produced by it. And those relations of the act to that happiness, are, that the act is an intelligent choice of that happiness, and the necessary and indispensable means, — or the procuring cause of the happiness. Thus perfect holiness is the cause, — the chosen, voluntary production of the highest happiness in the agent's power, both for himself and others.

Intelligent choice, — voluntary, designed production of the highest happiness in the agent's power, are essential elements in the nature of perfect holiness.

The tendency of entire holiness to produce the highest good in the agent's power, so far can never be thwarted, because, so far as that power is exerted, the result must be produced. To suppose otherwise, would imply that the good in question is not in the agent's power, which is contrary to the proposition.

But notwithstanding this, the tendency of holiness to promote the highest conceivable happiness, is and must be thwarted to some extent, though not destroyed, by sin, whenever and so far as sin exists at all and brings misery along with it. The tendency of *sin* to lessen and prevent the highest amount of holiness and happiness may be thwarted to some extent by holiness, but cannot be fully resisted nor destroyed. Sin has been, will be, and forever must be, a damage to the universe. The holiness and happiness of the intelligent universe

can never be what they might have been, had sin never been known in God's dominions.

265. What is sin which holiness is not?

Sin is the choice of, and is designed to secure, the inferior pleasure, notwithstanding it costs the sacrifice of the highest good.

Sin is the known and voluntary prevention of the highest good, for the sake of inferior pleasure, in known defiance of all the misery which may follow.

266. What, therefore, is the substantial and final difference between the nature and tendencies of holiness and sin?

The designed nature, the intent and tendency of holiness is to promote the highest general happiness, in kind and degree; while the true nature and tendency of sin is to prevent the greatest possible amount of happiness and produce the deepest misery. Holiness is the voluntary love and choice of the supreme good, and sin is the voluntary love and choice of the inferior and forbidden pleasure which debases and ruins the soul, and is an injury to the best good of the universe.

The results of holiness and sin compared. — Their comparative value in the four next questions considered.

267. What is the amount of self-denial required in a life of holiness?

(1.) To resist, mortify, and overcome the desires of the mind for all those pleasures which are inconsistent with our own best good for time and eternity, and are inconsistent with the best universal good; (2.) To refuse to gratify those desires, for whatever good, when by such refusal we have sufficient evidence that a greater amount of happiness can be produced than that of which we deny ourselves the enjoyment. (3.) And

to submit to that self-humiliation, and to those mortifications of pride which are necessary in repentance, — these three modes comprise the amount of self-denial required in a life of holiness.

268. What is the comparative value of those objects which can be obtained and promoted by a life of holiness, and those which can be obtained and which will result only from a life of sin?

The value of those objects which can be obtained only by a life of sin lies in those *pleasures* which can be obtained *only* by a sinful use of our mental and bodily powers, and by a sinful, forbidden use of the good things of Divine Providence. In order to a just estimation of this matter, we must subtract from the pleasures of a life of sin all the enjoyments in that life which might be obtained by a life of holiness.

Now, the good man may enjoy all the blessings and comforts of life which are consistent with his best eternal good, which the wicked man can have and enjoy; for example, food, clothing, house, home, friends, society, knowledge, influence, and all the variety of good things which the world affords, may be sources of as much and vastly more pleasure, when used in obedience to a righteous law, and in subservience to the general good, than when abused in sin.

Hence it follows, that the objects which can be obtained in a life of sin, and which cannot be obtained in a life of holiness, are all summed up in the pleasures of sin for a season, — and a short season it must be at the longest; few moments or days it may be, or a few years at most.

But these pleasures of sin for a season, it must not be forgotten, are inseparably connected with an eternity of woe beyond the grave; so that annihilation is in

finitely preferable to continued existence after dying in sin. Here, then, we have the short-lived pleasures of sin diminished by an eternity of unmitigated misery. Summed up, what is their value? Absolutely, infinitely worse than nothing.

Now, in contrast with all this,

269. What is the value of those objects which can be obtained by a life of holiness?

The objects to be obtained by a life of holiness are, (1.) The incomprehensible pleasure and delight which God will derive from the eternal life in holiness of one soul. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live." Ez. 53: 11. (2.) The joy which this life of holiness will give to angels, to all holy men, and to all the myriads of holy beings who may ever exist in the dominions of Jehovah. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Luke 15: 10. (3.) The victories which may be gained in the cause of truth and righteousness by a life of holiness, and in reclaiming sinners, in bringing them back to their allegiance to God, and in saving them from the eternal horrors of the second death. "He that converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." James 5: 20. (4.) The prevention of sin and misery in one's own soul, in the present life and a future eternity, united with the endless blessedness of rejoicing in the glory of God, and in the happiness of his holy kingdom; having in this life peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, the favor and fellowship of God, and for the future having the approbation, confidence, and love of all holy beings without end.

Here then, on one hand, for the motives, temptations, and allurements to sin, we have the pleasures of sin for a season. On the other, to deter from sin, the reproaches of conscience, the pangs of remorse, the disapprobation of the whole universe of rational beings, and all the consequences of sin, in the loss of our own souls, and in all the eternal damage that will be done by our sins to the universe of God. To allure us to holiness, we have the blessedness of an endless life, and all the happiness and holiness which we can promote in glorifying God, and in the advancement of the best good of his everlasting kingdom. (Comp. q. 150.)

270. Is it a very great, as well as a very common, mistake, to suppose that a virtuous, holy life detracts from a person's true, solid pleasures and highest happiness in the present life?

(1.) From what has been established in the preceding inquiry, it follows that to suppose a religious, holy life detracts from one's true, solid pleasures and highest happiness, is a most stupendous mistake, characterized by the most consummate folly. "Religion never was designed to make our pleasures less," but, on the contrary, to exalt them to the highest pitch of enjoyment practicable for the present life, as well as for that which is to come.

(2.) Since every person desires and seeks happiness, there is, in his nature, in the very constitution of his being, solid ground for the appeal to be most earnestly made to him, sustained by the utmost certainty of its truth, that his highest happiness for time and eternity can be obtained and secured only by a virtuous and religious life. In view of truth previously established, this appeal may be made with full confidence of success, if a thorough or a fair consideration of it can be

obtained, and unless it is wilfully, persistently, and most unwisely and wickedly resisted. And even then it may be hoped, that by the grace of God, the sinner may be persuaded voluntarily to listen to the voice of wisdom, obey it, and turn to God, and make heaven secure.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE FOREGOING VIEWS OF HOLINESS AND SIN TESTED BY HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS, AND BY AN APPEAL TO THE BIBLE.

271. THE question now to be tried is,

Do the views of holiness and sin expressed in the preceding chapters correspond with human consciousness?

(1.) If the studious and earnest inquirer after truth chooses to be fully satisfied on this point, he can answer this question for himself, by carefully reviewing what has been said in this discussion, with the question, whether it corresponds with his own consciousness, distinctly before his mind.

(2.) Conscious guilt implies the voluntary violation of known obligation (or which could and ought to have been known), when we had power to fulfil it. We are not conscious of guilt, in doing as we have done, when we are conscious that we did not and could not know better than to do as we have done. Nor are we conscious of blameworthiness, in not having performed an

act of any kind which we had not adequate power to perform. We are conscious of regarding impossibilities not to be duties, and of regarding it to be our duty to do as much good as we can; i. e. we are conscious of regarding our duty to be measured by our ability.

(3.) Since the most valuable and the greatest possible sum of universal happiness depends upon the greatest possible sum of universal holiness, as its necessary means, without which it could not exist, and since if this holiness does exist, this happiness must, it seems impossible that any man, who understands this matter, should esteem either holiness or happiness alone as the greatest good, or that any such man should fail to see that both united are essential to the greatest good.

If, as we think, we have demonstrated that holiness, separated from all its possible tendencies to happiness, is an impossibility, and if it is true, as we think we have proved, that highest universal holiness and happiness are, in the nature of things, mutually dependent upon each other, and inseparably connected with each other, then the greatest possible amount of universal holiness and happiness united, is the great good, the supreme good, the *summum bonum*. (q. 102.) We believe that neither highest holiness nor highest happiness can exist without the other. The truth of this proposition must be disproved before it can be shown that either holiness or happiness apart from the other, *is*, or can be a greater good than the other.

Now if a man should say that he is conscious of esteeming either universal holiness or universal happiness as a greater good than the other, our reply would be, we are conscious of believing that he esteems these things to be what they are not, — that his estimation is not according to the truth, or that he does not fairly

represent, or does not understand, what his consciousness is. It seems irrational to suppose that happiness is the only ultimate end, to obtain and promote which all the holy action that ever was or ever will be in the universe was put forth, and yet to suppose that this happiness is not worth the labor it costs. Nor does it appear any more reasonable to suppose that holiness is not worth as much as the happiness of which it is the necessary means.

(4.) A man may, indeed, give me a cup of cold water, in such circumstances as to evince to me that he is actuated by a spirit of impartial, universal benevolence, and I may consider that benevolence exercised through a long life as a greater good, — as worth more than the cup of cold water which he gave to me. So I may regard the infinite benevolence of God, exercised through eternity, as a greater good, — as worth more than all the happiness which he ever conferred upon me, or ever will confer upon any other individual. But that all his benevolence is worth either more or less than all the happiness which will ever result from his omnipotent holiness, I am not conscious of perceiving.

(5.) It seems to me that I am conscious of perceiving that to aim at the greatest usefulness, or at the production of the greatest good and happiness in my power, requires as little calculation as it does to have my intentions benevolent or right.

(6.) We are conscious that to perceive an action of the will, 1st, to be on the whole and in the highest degree useful; 2d, to be designedly and actually productive of highest happiness in one's power; 3d, to be benevolent; 4th, and to perceive that action to be right, are all substantially one and the same thing, and there-

fore as little calculation is necessary in one case as in the other, or rather these four cases are all substantially one and the same. (q. 146.)

272. (7.) Is the fact that a doctrine is easily understood an objection to it? That virtue, according to the doctrine of benevolent rectitude, is so easy to be understood, has been made an objection to it.

Reply. In the Word of God, the way of holiness is represented to be so plain that "a wayfaring man though a fool shall not err therein," and that "he may run that readeth [a description of] it." If the way of holiness was not easy to be understood, the largest part of mankind would be unable to walk in it. That the doctrine of benevolent rectitude is so easy to be understood, instead of being an objection, is a very weighty consideration in its favor.

(8.) We believe that every man is conscious that his object in all he does is to obtain happiness, and, therefore, we believe that a strict observation and scrutiny of his own consciousness will show that he is truly conscious of being moved in all he does by the subjective motive of a desire for his own happiness, as we have shown to be the fact. (q. 58, § 10.) And if a desire to obtain and promote happiness is the conscious subjective motive of holy action, then happiness must be the ultimate object of such action.

Having, in the preceding discussion, so largely made quotations in illustration and confirmation of the doctrine and arguments of this treatise, from some of the most eminent divines and ethical philosophers, who have lived in these latter ages of the world, this method of confirmation and line of argument need not here be repeated. It seems needful here only to refer to those citations already made. It now remains only to

cap the climax of the argument by an appeal to the Bible.

273. Does the doctrine that holiness consists only in universal, impartial benevolence correspond with the Bible?

In the following portions of the sacred word, God appeals to that eternal principle of right, which is the fundamental law and moral constitution of the universe. "O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? Are not your ways unequal?" Ez. 18: 29. "Judge I pray you betwixt me and my vineyard. What more could have been done to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" Isa. 5: 34. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Mat. 22: 39. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." Matt. 7: 12.

That this primordial principle of right is the basis on which all divine legislation proceeds, and on which all the commandments of God are founded, is manifest by the following Scriptures: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Ex. 20: 3. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." Luke 10: 27. "God is love." 1 John 4: 16. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. 13: 10. "The end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart." 1 Tim. 1: 5.

These passages from the Word of God show also that impartial, universal benevolence comprehends all the duty which God requires of men.

That the goodness or holiness of God, and that which he requires of us, consists in doing good or promoting happiness, is implied in the following: "He left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us

rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." Acts 14: 17. "Do good to them that hate you, . . . that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matt. 5: 44, 45.

274. Are the motives by which men are urged in the Bible to be holy, addressed to their desires of happiness and dread of misery?

That the motives by which men are urged in the Bible to be holy, are addressed to their desires of happiness and dread of misery, appears in the following texts:

"Flee from the wrath to come." Matt. 3: 7. "Lay hold on eternal life." 1 Tim. 6: 12. "This is eternal life, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." John 17: 3. "The wages of sin is death. But the gift of God is eternal life." Rom. 6: 23. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Ez. 18: 4. "The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish." Isa. 60: 12. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly." Ps. 1: 1. "Great peace have they who love thy law." Ps. 119: 165. "Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him." Isa. 3: 10. "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness." Matt. 5: 6. "Blessed are they that do his commandments." Rev. 22: 14. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20: 35. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." Gal. 3: 10. "Woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him." Isa. 3: 11. Passages like these are scattered through the Bible.

In addition to the quotations from Scripture already

made, we might multiply them to an indefinite extent, in confirmation of the sentiment that the desire of happiness and the dread of misery is the primary motive addressed to men in the Bible to persuade them to be holy, and, therefore, that happiness must be the ultimate object of all right action. On these passages of revelation we may rely for an immovable support of the doctrine of Benevolent Rectitude and Utility. It is, therefore, with unfeigned surprise, that we read in the Presbyterian Quarterly Review, that "it must certainly strike the mind of the careful reader, how little, to say the least, this idea of [*enjoyment*, as the end of the individual or that of the world, is made prominent in the Bible." — Dec. 1855, p. 458.

We submit this point to the decision of every *careful* reader of the Bible, when he has considered how many times we are called upon to secure the blessedness of eternal life, and to lay up treasures in heaven, and how many times blessedness is promised to the righteous, and misery threatened to the wicked.

275. *Why*, therefore, are the objective motives of the Bible addressed ultimately to men's desires of happiness and dread of misery?

Because this is the only possible ultimate principle to which they can be addressed, and this must be so as long as the constitution of the human mind remains unchanged.

276. Why is holiness in the Bible called wisdom, and wisdom said to be the principal thing?

Because holiness is the one thing needful, — needful to please God and glorify him, — needful to answer the end of our creation, — needful to secure eternal happiness for ourselves, and to promote the greatest extension of happiness throughout the kingdom of God, and be-

cause for these reasons holiness *is* the *highest* wisdom, — the greatest prudence, — the most consummate usefulness, — the most comprehensive expediency, — the most excellent moral beauty, — and the most noble and exalted moral sublimity; in short, because holiness is the most excellent and most efficacious means of the most excellent happiness and exalted felicity, glory, and honor, not only of the moral governor of the universe, but of all under his government who will practice holiness.

277. Why is the sinner in the Sacred Oracles called a fool?

The sinner is called a fool in the Sacred Oracles because he seeks the gratification of his desires where he cannot find his highest happiness, either for time or eternity. By spending his probation in the commission of sin, he is guilty of the most consummate folly and wickedness, not that he commits the greatest number of the most wicked particular acts, but that the one comprehensive process of destroying his own soul, in connection with the natural results of such wickedness, in the ruin of others, and in the prevention of good in the kingdom of God, is unsurpassed and unsurpassable folly and wickedness. How different from this is the dictate of wisdom, "Do thyself no harm." "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Acts 16: 28, and Mark 8: 36. "Them that honor me I will honor, but they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." 1 Sam. 2: 30.

278. What reason has God himself given why it is his supreme desire and preference that men should be holy and not sin.

"I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this

abominable thing which I hate." Jer. 44: 4. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5: 48. "Ye shall be holy: for I, the Lord your God, am holy." Lev. 19: 2. God's hatred of sin, and his holiness are among the reasons assigned by him for demanding our holiness. God is almighty, but that is no reason why we should be almighty.

279. Why, then, is the holiness of God a reason for our holiness?

Since God is holy, if we obey him, obedience will make us happy and promote the happiness of others. A holy, sin-hating God cannot permit his enemies to be permanently happy under his moral government. Iniquity must be their ruin. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live." Ez. 33: 11. "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, wherefore turn yourselves and live ye." Ez. 18: 32. If God has no pleasure at all in the sin and death of the wicked, but has great pleasure in their repentance, holiness, eternal life, and blessedness, then it is his supreme preference that men should always be holy, rather than that they should commit sin. Since God is holy, if his rational creatures would be happy, they must be holy, and thus coöperate with him in making others happy.

One very important reason which God at one time gives for his preference of holiness to sin, without alluding to any other, is, that it might be *well* with the Israelites and their children forever. And thus he exclaims: "Oh that there were such an heart in them that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them and their children forever." Deut. 5: 29. "If thou hadst known the things that belong to thy peace, but now

they are hid from thine eyes." Luke 19: 42. Here we have God's supreme desire and preference of holiness to sin, and the only and ultimate assigned reason for that preference is, that he has no pleasure in their sin and death, but has a pleasure in their eternal life and happiness.

280. What is the true method of forming rules for moral conduct, so as to be sure they are right?

In forming moral rules, the first thing to be done is to ascertain the fundamental or first principles, or the necessary and intuitive truths of morality, and to make such deductions as must necessarily follow from them, resulting in the general law which requires the highest general happiness to be loved and sought; and then the second thing to be done is, to learn by experience, and by all practical ways, the best means and methods of accomplishing those ends of goodness or happiness.

These are self-evident truths: 1st. That all duties are possibilities; 2d. That I am bound to do good, and to love my neighbor and other sentient beings, so as to promote as much happiness and prevent as much misery as I can. To all who fairly understand these affirmations, we judge they are either self-evident, or necessarily deducible from such truths as are self-evident and necessary; and to the extent in which they are understood, we believe they are universally admitted. What child of Adam, having common sense, can be found who will deny that we ought to do all the good we can, i. e. promote as much happiness and prevent as much misery as we find to be in our power? What moral truth is there more universally admitted than this? Not one.

The only question remaining regards the ways and

means best adapted to do good, or, which is the same, to promote happiness and prevent misery.

Whatever God requires by the light of reason, or the precepts of revelation, we may know to be right and best adapted to promote happiness and prevent misery. That God commands, is conclusive, unquestionable proof that the thing required will promote happiness. Whatever we know to be right and obligatory, as benevolence, love to God, good-will to sentient beings in general, justice, faithfulness, veracity, gratitude, temperance, chastity, and love to our neighbor, doing to others as we would that they should do to us, obedience to parents, to civil government, etc., we may safely and certainly conclude to be in the highest degree promotive of happiness, for ourselves and others, for the public and for individuals.

In regard to those particular and specific duties which depend on circumstances, no absolute and unchangeable rules can be formed. The rules of duty in such cases must be formed by the best light we have and can obtain from observation and experience, by applying general principles to particular cases, according to circumstances, as best we can, always having in view, as our supreme and ultimate end, the most valuable amount of general happiness in our power. In deciding, in particular or doubtful cases, what duty requires, we must regard that as our duty which appears, by the best means we have of judging, to be best adapted to the promotion of happiness. In all circumstances of doubtful duty, adopt that course which appears to be best adapted to do good and promote happiness. In all expenditures of money for buildings, dress, food, and all that appertains to style of living, or for whatever pleasures of life, the simple inquiry should be,

What will best promote happiness? and the supreme object should be to do that which, according to the best judgment we can form, is best adapted to promote the greatest and most valuable amount of happiness.

281. How shall a person know whether he is really and truly virtuous?

If a person finds himself consecrated in heart and life to the service of God, in obedience to his will, revealed in his Word and written on the conscience, so that it is his supreme purpose to do all the good and promote all the happiness in his power, and proved to be his purpose by its being carried out in the acts of his daily life, — then his character is truly virtuous, but not otherwise. If he regards his own interests and pleasures more than the rights of God and the well-being of his fellow men, if he habitually disobeys any known rule of duty, if he intends to continue in any known sin, if he has no compassion for the poor and the oppressed, if it be not his daily prayer and labor to promote the kingdom of Christ and the reign of righteousness in the world, if it is not his supreme object to do all the good in his power, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

CONCLUSION.

CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE WITH GOD. — THE WAY TO BECOME HOLY CONSIDERED.

282. IN what ways can moral beings stand with acceptance before God?

If the nature, foundation, and extent of moral obligation, — if the nature and tendencies of holiness, — if the nature and tendencies of sin are what, in the previous discussion, they are represented to be, then it follows that, in accordance with the Bible, there are two, and only two, ways in which moral beings may stand with acceptance before God and inherit eternal life.

The first is by a complete fulfilment of all their obligations, in performing the deeds required by the moral law, — the law of eternal right. Obligation which cannot be fulfilled cannot exist. This way of justification by the deeds of the law is possible to moral beings only before their commission of sin, by their voluntary deeds, in which they transgress known law. After transgression, whenever they should be brought to stand on trial by law, by the law which they have transgressed, their condemnation must be inevitable, for the plain and simple and only reason, that by their own transgression they have become guilty, and so they must forever remain and stand before God, unless, upon condition of repentance, they obtain a pardon, which cannot be granted without reference to an atonement, — to an adequate substitute for penalty.

The second and only other method of salvation, then, indeed the only method of salvation for sinners, is by repentance, and by faith in Christ, when Christ is known. It becomes, then, a question of vital interest, —

283. What are repentance and faith, as the conditions of salvation?

(1.) Repentance is a radical change of voluntary moral character. It is a thorough renunciation of sin and a departure from the ways of transgression, and a corresponding devotion and consecration to the duties of a holy life. It is waging a perpetual warfare with sin, until a final victory is gained. Repentance implies a godly sorrow in view of the shame, degradation, disgrace, moral pollution, and ill-desert which sin has brought upon the soul, and in view of the damage which sin has done to the sinning agent, and to the interests of God's moral kingdom, which can never be fully and entirely repaired. When repentance is what it should be, it is an intention to part with all sin immediately and forever, and to fulfil entirely all future obligations by the full discharge of every duty. Repentance is a change in the controlling principle, the governing purpose of a person's life; it is changing the supreme object of love and pursuit. It is adopting the principle of right for the supreme rule of duty; it implies an abhorrence of a life of sin, and a real, hearty forsaking it. It is submission to the will of God.

What repentance ought to be, and therefore can be, is manifest by the following. "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts [that is, his wicked intentions]: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Isa. 55: 7.

"Repent and turn *yourselves* from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby you have transgressed: and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die O house of Israel." Ez. 18: 30, 31. "Break off thy sins by righteousness." Dan. 4: 27.

284. But how can repentance and faith be performed?

Repentance can be performed as the Psalmist says he performed it. "I thought on my ways and turned my feet unto thy testimonies." Ps. 119: 59. Consideration is an essential preliminary to repentance. When a sinner suitably considers the enormity of his sins as committed against a God of perfect love, of long forbearance and tender mercy, who is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3: 9); when he considers the shame, disgrace, degradation, and moral pollution and suffering which his sins bring upon himself; and when he considers the sacred nature, foundation, and extent of the obligations violated by his sins, — the nature, tendencies, and results of his sins in the prevention of happiness and production of misery; in contrast with the results which might be produced by his repentance and holy life, the wonder and astonishment in heaven, and the philosophical mystery on earth, is, that he should fail to repent.

When a sinner has any desire to repent, let him think on his ways, in the light of the previous discussion, and in the further light of the Bible, of reason and his own conscience, and let him thus arouse himself to repentance, as a work now on hand to be done, to be done in earnest and without delay. And let him remember that "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Let him choose God for his

moral governor, and take the laws of God's government for the rule of his obedience, and accept the pardon of his sins, as offered in the gospel; let him justify his Maker, admit the justice of his own condemnation, and let him cast himself on the mercy of God in Christ, and thus make God the portion of his soul. Let him yield to the leadings of the Divine Spirit, and thus secure the aid of his gracious influence, "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Let him trample all the temptations to a continued life in sin under foot, and submit to all the self-denial, humiliation, and self-mortification, which is necessary in the confession and renunciation of his sin.

Let the sinner remember that this work of fixing his heart on God, is a work for him to do (in the exercise of his own power given by his Creator), by his own free act and choice, — that it is to be done under such gracious influences as God may please to grant him, and under the moral influence of such motives as his obligations and truth present, and as he can summon, in view of which he himself is to decide, by his own choice, where and how he will spend his eternity. Let him not under any consideration relinquish this work, nor falter in it, until he has actually accomplished it.

"There is a time we know not when,
A point we know not where,
That marks the destiny of men
To glory or despair.

There is a line, by us unseen,
That crosses every path;
The hidden boundary between
God's patience and his wrath.

To pass that limit is to die.

* * * * * *

Oh, where is this mysterious bourn
By which our path is crossed;
Beyond which, God himself has sworn
That he who goes is lost!

How long may we go on in sin?
How long will God forbear?
Where does hope end, and where begin
The confines of despair.

An answer from the skies is sent:
'Ye that from God depart,
While it is called to-day, repent,
And harden not your heart.'"

J. A. Alexander, D. D.

About this work of repentance, we have one thing more to say, which should never be forgotten. If this work of repentance is never done, until one is compelled to do it, by some physical influence, or some irresistible and omnipotent power, it will remain undone forever.

Repentance unto life is a saving change in the ruling choice of the mind, whereby the sinner doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God as the supreme object of his love, with full purpose of, and endeavors after, entire obedience. The way, and only way to do this work, is to consider the reasons why it should be done, — to consider the demands of God, of reason, and of conscience that it should be done, and then acting wisely in view of these demands, obey them.

Faith in Christ is such a rational conviction of truth revealed concerning him as leads to a voluntary exercise of the mind, wherein the repentant sinner commits his soul to Christ as a Saviour, and trusts in him alone for pardon and salvation as he is offered to us in the gospel.

The way to exercise faith in Christ is to receive and obey the truth revealed concerning him.

Now by repentance and faith in Christ, a life of holiness is attainable. While it is a fact that men as willing servants of sin, yield themselves to its dominion, it is also true that God, in the exercise of justice, has made them able to obey the law, which he holds them bound to obey, under the penalty of his righteous displeasure.

The original foundation of men's obligation to obey a righteous law, is laid in their constitution as moral beings, i. e. in their ability to fulfil all its demands.

Under the gospel our obligations to a life of perfect and permanent holiness have a twofold foundation. In the first place we are under the original obligations arising from the natural powers of our moral constitution; in the second place, we are under the additional obligations of the promised aid of the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, upon condition of our compliance with the gospel.

For these reasons a life of entire holiness is now in a double sense attainable. To attain this life, the moral powers of the mind must be put in earnest requisition, in coöperation with all the support and aids which God in the exercise of justice, love, and mercy, is ever pleased to bestow. This coöperation with the Holy Spirit must be carried on by faith in Christ as an Almighty Saviour, as the only mediator between God and man. We must commit our souls to him as being willing and "able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. 7: 25.

To attain to a permanent state of the entire fulfilment of all our obligations to God, we must receive Christ in all his offices as our Saviour, Mediator, Re-

deemer, and Sanctifier, as our prophet, priest, and king. Doing this, if having faith in the gracious promises of the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, we comply with the conditions of these promises, and appropriate them to ourselves, there is a twofold ground of assurance that a character of entire holiness is attainable in this life.

Seeing, then, that there is this twofold ground of assurance that entire holiness of character is attainable in this life, let every one enter at once, without any more loss of time, upon the pursuit of entire sanctification in the practice of holiness, and not rest satisfied until he has gained the *victory over every sin*, and then, by a patient continuance in well-doing, go on to seek for glory and honor and immortality, and thus to make higher and higher attainments in holiness until death is swallowed up of life.

And now, in conclusion, the author's prayer to the Infinite and Almighty One is, that he may be permitted through grace to meet in heaven many, who, by the divine blessing on this attempt to make known his truth and advance his kingdom among men, shall have been induced to prepare for glory, and then from time to time in ages to come, that he may be permitted to welcome to that holy and blessed land some who have been persuaded to turn from sin to

"Holiness, the road
That we must take to dwell with God."

"Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

So let it be. Amen.

APPENDIX.

A.

[Referred to on page 31.]

A SPECIMEN OF SOCRATIC REASONING.

A conversation, copied from an English grammar printed in London, 1721, between a Thomist and another, about the efficacy of Divine Providence, supposed to be the specimen of Socratic reasoning to which Dr. Franklin somewhere alludes, as that from which he learned to confound his opponents when he could not, to his own satisfaction, answer their reasonings. The Thomist is represented by *A*.

A. I WONDER you are so obstinate as to deny that God has an efficacious operation in the sins of men, which the Scriptures in many places so openly and plainly testify.

B. I only deny that I understand how this is done. Perhaps my dullness makes that a difficulty to me, which is obvious to another. But I would willingly be informed by you, because I can neither believe nor condemn what I do not understand; what, therefore, do you mean by an *efficacious operation in the sins of men?* do you mean that he makes them sin?

A. Far be that from me, for so God would be the author of sin. Man commits sin, not God.

B. Do you mean, that God makes men to commit sin, or forces them to commit sin?

A. I would not have expressed this in so rude a manner; but God, in a dark and unknown manner, so permits sin that it must necessarily be committed.

B. You used before the word *operation*, now you use the word permit, pray do they mean the same thing?

A. These words do not absolutely mean the same thing, but they must be joined together, so that what God does should be called an efficacious permission; for God neither makes sin nor does he simply permit it.

B. You, therefore, mean that God permits something, and does something, so that sin necessarily follows.

A. That is what I mean.

B. Perhaps, then, God does in this what *he* does who, cutting down the dykes, lets the waters in to overflow the fields. For he *does* something in breaking down the dykes, and he permits something in suffering the sea to pass through the breach.

A. My mind could not have been expressed by a more happy similitude.

B. According to our common way of speaking, we should say that he who made a breach in the dyke had let in the waters, nor would any accuse the dyke or the sea of any manner of fault; but you, if I mistake not, accuse man of the fault, and say man, not God, committed the sin. Wherefore your *efficacious permission* seems unintelligible to me.

A. Do you not observe that as to the things themselves there is a vast difference between them? For men are endowed with understanding, conscience, and will, which the dyke and sea have not; and for that reason, that is a crime in man which is not so in the sea and the dyke.

B. But I ask you whether that which God does or permits, has that efficacy (for that word you have likewise used), that men can no more not sin when that has ordered it, than the sea not overflow the fields through the beach which affords a free passage?

A. You have my meaning.

B. According, therefore, to you there is the same relation in that sense between God and sin, as there is between the man who made the breach in the dyke and the destruction of the fields.

A. There is, as to the event, for both are equally necessary.

B. The action, therefore, of both, according to the custom of speech, may be expressed in the same manner. That is, — as he who broke down the dyke is called the cause of the loss of the fields, because he did that which necessarily produced that loss; so God is the author of sin, since he has put man under the necessity of sinning.

A. I told you before that I will not make use of those rude expressions.

B. But either I do not understand what you say, or it comes to that point; for we must not regard the empty sound of words, which signify nothing, but mind the ideas to which they are annexed.

A. What! will you prescribe rules to me of speaking, as if I did not know how to hold a discourse? You sufficiently understand that my opinion is that God has to do with evil, that he is not a mere, bare spectator, but is so far an agent, that upon his acting, men commit sin.

B. If God did nothing before the sin, would not the sin be committed?

A. No, for nothing is done without the efficacy of Divine Providence.

B. What, do you believe that man alone cannot violate laws?

A. That he can, I deny, when I deny that any thing can be done without the efficacy of Divine Providence.

B. God, therefore, helps us to do wickedly in the same manner as he helps us to do well.

A. You mistake, for in evil we must distinguish the *action*, from the *viciousness* of the action. God helps us to the *doing* of the action, but not to the *vice* of the action. But in good actions he helps us to the *good* that is in the actions.

B. I beg you to inform me, what do you mean by the words *an action*, and what by the *viciousness* of an action?

A. I will make it plain to you by this example: In the hatred of our neighbor there is the action of the hatred, which in itself is indifferent, and is only called bad when directed to an unlawful object, and good when to a lawful. Next, there is the relation of that action to the object, which is evil. God does

not concur to this relation, though there is a necessity of his concurring to action, without which it could not be done.

B. By what you have said I suppose you mean that God first generates in the mind of man hatred, in general, which is in itself neither good nor evil; then there comes another relation to the object, as in the example to our neighbor. Do I understand you?

A. Partly, you do, but not entirely, for I do not think there is any such existence as hatred in general, which should afterwards be determined to a certain object; this is contrary to experience.

B. Does God, then, create that very hatred that is directed against our neighbor?

A. Most certainly the hatred, but not the relation.

B. But does that hatred exist without that relation?

A. Not at all, for the very moment that it is created in our minds, it is the hatred of our neighbor.

B. According, therefore, to you, God creates such an hatred, which coëxists in such a manner with a vicious relation, that it cannot be separated or distinguished from it but by abstraction.

A. He does so.

B. Can this hatred, thus generated in the mind of man, be by the man directed to the lawful object, as vice, for example?

A. It cannot; for the action of God being past, the certain event must necessarily follow.

B. I beseech you, sir, if a man should put a burden on another's shoulders, which he that bore it could not afterwards throw off, and by that means should break his ribs, would not he that put on such a burden be looked on as the breaker of his ribs, if he had known the event of his action?

A. Most certainly.

B. Should a man push another, walking by a river-side, into the water, who should there be drowned, should we not say that he who thrust him in drowned him?

A. Certainly.

B. Yet there are some men who would say, that *you* are in

an error in this admission, and insist that the *imposing* and the *thrusting* was produced by the men supposed, but not the breaking the ribs, and the drowning, just as you suppose God generates the hatred which is directed against our neighbor without that evil relation.

A. It is most evident, that the *men* instanced, were guilty of the fracture and the drowning; but the matter is otherwise with God, who is not obliged to give account to poor miserable men of his administration.

B. But if he did what you wickedly persuade us [it would follow], both that all *sinners* must be acquitted of any crime, and that God himself, who compels the sins [so called must be] condemned.

A. Do you not know that God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts ours; shall man reply against God?

Hence it is evident to all that hear it, that Mr. A. the Thomist, either knows not what he means, or makes God the author of sin.

It is said that Dr. Emmons, by way of eminence the great expounder of the *Divine Efficiency* scheme, once proposed to a circle of friends (perhaps his former pupils), to read to them a sermon on the six days' work of creation, which he had been writing, when one of them asked, "What do you prove?" Said the Doctor, "I prove that the proper work of creation was finished in six days, so that the creation of all things which can properly be said to be created was finished in six days."

"Well," inquired his friend, "have you proved that the work of creating our moral exercises was finished in the six days?" The Doctor was so nonplussed that he refused to read.

B.

[Referred to, p. 68.]

SECTION I.

WHAT are some of the principal points of doctrine, held by men eminent for talents and learning, inconsistent with the truth, that power to the contrary choice is essential to moral agency and responsibility?

1. It has been held, that acts of willing or choosing are not voluntary acts, but that only those acts which are produced or caused by or proceed from acts of the will, are voluntary.

Reply. If those acts of mine, which are called acts of will, are not voluntary, then they are necessitated, and if *they* are necessitated, then those acts of body or mind which are caused or produced by them are not voluntary, but necessitated also; e. g. If the act of my mind by which my hand is raised, is not voluntary, then the raising of my hand is not voluntary but necessary; for if the act of will is put forth by which the hand is caused to rise, then the hand must rise, and I have no power to the contrary. I cannot both will to raise my hand and hold it still at the same time. So, then, instead of the motion of the hand being exclusively voluntary, all that is voluntary in the process is the act of will by which the hand is raised. To deny that the mind is voluntary in willing is a simple absurdity, as well as a contradiction. It is the same as to deny that the mind wills when it wills.

The delusion that the mind is not voluntary in its acts of will and choice, is occasioned and led on by the supposition that moral quality belongs to the involuntary constitutional propensities, desires, affections, and feelings of the sensibility, and which, from the necessity of nature, are not voluntary exercises, and are not immediately in the mind's control, and, of course,

cannot by any possibility of themselves, independent of their connection with the will, possess any moral character. (See q. 447.)

To maintain that the mind is not voluntary in willing and choosing,* is a virtual denial of the power of moral agency, and, of course, is a denial of the foundation of moral obligation.

2. Another doctrine, inconsistent with the principle of power to the contrary, is that sin consists in constitutional, innate, involuntary dispositions, inclinations, desires, affections, or propensities, which precede all choice and voluntary action, and is according to the following words of Dr. Alexander, the Princeton Review, and Dr. Woods.

"Voluntary wickedness is nothing else but bringing into act what before existed in principle in the soul." — p. 150. "Our moral character radically consists in our feelings and desires. That all virtue consists in volition is not true." — p. 208. "There are exercises of mind which do not involve any exercise of will; and that our volitions have nothing of a moral nature but what they derive from the motives from which they proceed." — p. 207. "Our desires and affections are not subject to our volitions." — p. 200.†

With no little indignation, the Princeton Review, Jan. 1853, in its article on Dr. Alexander's Moral Science, utterly condemns the following statements:

"1st. A limitation of moral quality to actual choice, with the power to the contrary choice at the same moment, and in the same circumstances. 2d. As a consequence, plenary ability in fallen man to fulfil all God's commands. 3d. That all dispositions, desires, feelings, and principles, lying back of and uncaused by choice, in the manner aforesaid, have no moral character." Of course, then, the Princeton reviewers hold that impenitent sinners have no adequate power for right action, and

* See Dr. Woods on Mental Philosophy, in the Theological Review, 1834, p. 86.

† Moral Science; by Archibald Alexander, D. D, late Prof. of Theology, Princeton.

that they are chargeable with sin before any voluntary action at all.

"Every man must decide, and does decide, that a propensity, inclination, or disposition to sin is the very [*essence* of sin, and the only thing which makes any outward action or [*any volition* sinful." — p. 135. "It is as true of Adam as of any other man, that every sinful volition and act of his presupposed a sinful disposition, and must have arisen from it." — p. 112.*

"No volition or choice of the mind can be considered sinful, unless it is connected with a sinful disposition or affection, and prompted by it." †

Reply. That which precedes all choice and voluntary action cannot be avoided, and, of course, cannot be sin. To suppose that to be sin which cannot be avoided, is in contravention of the intuitive principle, *that what ought to be done can be done, and what ought to be avoided can be avoided.* Since power to know and perform his duty is essential to the nature and obligation of a moral agent, the supposition that any thing whatever which precedes all choice and voluntary action is sin, must be utterly untrue and without reason.

Those innate, constitutional, involuntary dispositions, inclinations, desires, and propensities, which belong to our nature, or by a natural necessity result from it, are sources of the temptations which prompt us to the commission of sin. But if we do not yield to temptation, by the voluntary consent of the mind to pursue the forbidden gratification, no sin is committed. And none is or can be justly laid to our account. If we had not the adequate power to resist temptation, there could be no obligation to resist it. And then there would be no sin in yielding to it. If we do not yield in any degree to temptation, there is no sin in being tempted. Jesus Christ was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." — Heb. 4: 15.

Our constitutional propensities and desires are not only the sources of our temptations to sin, but they are the only possible

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* Dr. Woods's Reply to Dr. Ware's Letters.

† Dr. Woods's Remarks on Dr. Ware's Answer, p. 24.

sources of subjective motive to right action. Without a susceptibility of motives to right action, we should have no power to know or perform our duty, and, of course, without such a susceptibility we should not be moral agents, for the reason that what ought to be done can be done, and what ought to be avoided can be avoided. Hence *innate*, inborn, concreated, sinful depravity, is an impossibility, — an utter absurdity.

3. It has been correctly held, that natural necessity is that which men are under from the force of natural causes, as distinguished from moral causes. And that natural necessity is the connection between causes and effects which are not of a moral nature, and that it cannot be resisted by all the power of mind and body. We think that that necessity by which an event takes place is a natural necessity, where there is no power to the contrary.

In connection with this doctrine of natural necessity it has been held, that 'moral necessity is the necessary connection between moral causes and effects. And by moral causes is meant inclinations and motives, and by moral effects is meant moral acts and moral character. And that this connection is full and fixed, infallible, unavoidable, unalterable, unfrustrable, and irresistible by any power that can be supposed in the case.'

And then it has been set forth, 'that the difference, between these two kinds of necessity, lies chiefly in the nature of the two terms connected, or that natural and moral necessity differ not so much in their nature as in the things connected,' and this, in our view, implies that there is no essential difference between natural and moral necessity except in name; since one is as absolute as the other.

In the language of President Edwards, "moral necessity . . . is that necessity of connection and consequence which arises from such moral causes as the strength of inclination or motives, and the connection there is between them and . . . certain volitions and actions." "Moral necessity," he says, "may be as absolute as natural necessity. That is, the effect may be as perfectly connected with its moral cause, as a natural necessary effect is with its natural cause." He adds: "When motives or

previous biases are very strong, all will allow there is some difficulty in going against them. And if they were yet stronger, the difficulty would be still greater. And, therefore, if more still were added to their strength to a certain degree, it would make the difficulty so great that it would be wholly impossible to surmount it. For this plain reason, because, whatever power men may be supposed to have to surmount difficulties, yet that power is not infinite, and so goes not beyond certain limits."—Pres. Edwards on the Will, part i. § 4, pp. 40, 42.

Now when and where this is the case there can be no power to the contrary, and, of course, no power to choose, and therefore no power for free responsible action, because where there is no power to the contrary, the necessity by which an event takes place, or that necessity by which a certain act must be performed, is a *natural necessity.*

4. Another doctrine of like bearing upon the question before us which has been held, is, that man has not power to originate his own moral acts, but that his moral acts are produced by the creative efficiency of an Almighty cause, which is of course external to himself and out of his power to control. If this be so, then his acts are necessary by natural, irresistible necessity, and man has no more power to act in any other way, than as he is caused to act by the omnipotent causation of a power not his own, than a steam-engine has to draw a train of cars, without being acted upon by steam or by any other power. And mind is no more an agent with inherent power to act or to originate voluntary action than matter is, and then the mind has no more power to act, than matter has power to move, without any external power acting to move it. (See q. 25.)

The four doctrines last stated amount substantially to the same thing, and have substantially the same bearing upon the question before us, so that the reasons why any one of them should be rejected are good and sufficient, why every one of them should be.

For what reasons should the four last-named doctrines be rejected?

(1.) If either of these forms of doctrine were true, then those

mental acts which we call moral, are necessitated by an irresistible necessity. If this be so, then no matter by what name you call this necessity, or what epithets you apply to it, whether natural or moral, if it is unavoidable, if it can be neither overcome nor resisted, then man has no power to act but in one way, and that is in the way in which he does and must act, and he has no power of contrary choice — and in reality no power of choice at all — no *power* of voluntary action, nothing but the *possibility* of being acted upon.

If the premises on which this reasoning is based were true and valid, the inevitable result would be, that man is not truly an agent. And if these premises were founded in reality and truth, they would just as inevitably result in the conclusion, that there is but one agent in the universe, as that man is not an agent. Doctrines which land so directly in absurdity, cannot have their foundation in truth.

(2.) If our actions are necessitated by a proper irresistible necessity, then there is no foundation for moral obligation, and so far as we are concerned, free, moral, responsible agency and moral obligation, holiness and sin, are nothing but fictions of the imagination; and the common sense of a world is no criterion of truth.

(3.) By this philosophy, if true, all possibility of accounting for the origin of the ideas of *moral obligation, right and wrong*, would be taken away. For although mere imaginary ideas have no corresponding reality, yet they are composed of simpler ones which have a corresponding reality. But if all these moral ideas are but imaginary, then no simpler moral ideas are to be found, of which these could be composed or made up, or from which they could be derived. And then it follows that all men who use the terms choice, moral obligation, right and wrong, i. e. all men of all ages and of all nations, have been deluded by terms for which there has been no just occasion, and which have no meaning consistent with truth, and in fact no meaning at all. All which is inconceivable.

5. Another form of doctrine, which has been extensively held,

inconsistent with power to the contrary, relates to the three following points: —

(1.) Natural ability, (2.) Moral inability, and (3.) Moral ability, and is as follows. It has been held by authority of high reputation,

(1.) That natural ability consists in a power to *choose only* in accordance with an existing disposition or according to certain motives, called the prevailing and strongest motives, and to *act only* according to such choice,* and that is power to choose and act just as they do, and in no other way. And this is all the ability which sinners have to do their duty, and is in reality nothing but power to commit sin, which is not sin. Therefore, if the phrase *natural ability* is not designed to signify a power of mind adequate to the performance of duty, then, the thing which is meant, whatever it be, if it exist at all, may exist where moral obligation does not. And then it can never constitute the ground or measure of moral obligation, nor constitute its possessor a moral agent. Such natural ability amounts to nothing but a natural *inability*, so far as any and all duty is concerned.

(2.) In connection with this doctrine it has been held, that sinners are subjects of a *moral inability*, which consists in an entire want of ability to choose, but in accordance with the existing disposition or the prevailing and strongest motives, and in the same want of ability to act, save in accordance with their choice, thus caused by these strongest motives which they have no power to resist. So that *sinners have no ability to do their duty.* — Princeton Essays, pp. 266, 267, 277. And thus this *moral* inability is nothing but a *natural* inability to perform duty.

That the strongest motives always prevail, has never yet been proved, and, as we believe, for this very good reason, that it never can be. To prove that the strongest motives always prevail, it has been argued that the prevailing motives are the strongest because they prevail, and they prevail because they

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* Princeton Essays, 275, 277; First Series, 1846.

are the strongest. This reasoning would be good in physical causation, but not in morals. But how is it known that the motives which prevail are the strongest? The reply often made is, because the strongest must prevail. This, then, is both reasoning in a circle and begging the question. Now we know that the motives which prevail are often not the strongest in the eye of reason, but infinitely the weakest.

(3.) A third part of this form of doctrine is, that moral ability consists in a right state of heart or a right disposition, which is the essence of obedience.

According to this, men must first begin to do their duty, in order to have any ability to do it. — Ibid. pp. 266, 267, 272, 273, 277. And before they begin, they have not in fact any power to begin, and therefore all the ability which men have to perform duty is only in name. In reality it is nothing but *inability.*

These three notions amount to one and the same thing, which is, that men, before they are converted from sin to holiness, have no ability of any kind or in any sense which consists in a power adequate to the performance of any duty, and this is the same as to maintain, that they have a *natural inability* which consists of an absolute impossibility to do a right and holy act, in obedience to any command of God, or in the fulfilment of any moral obligation.

And then, if these three notions thus resulting in natural inability were true, we should be brought again to the doctrine of fatalism, and there would be no refuge from it, with all its direful train of consequences. As long as the world has common sense, it will never believe this doctrine.

6. An attempt has been made to prove that 'the maxim, that *no man is under obligation to do that which he has no power to perform,* does not (according to the common sense of mankind) apply to the act of volition, but only to the ability to act according to our will.' — Ibid. p. 277.

This maxim we have claimed to be self-evident, fundamental, and universal in its application to acts of will, as well as to those acts of body and mind which are consequent upon voli-

tions, and to this extent to be in accordance with the universal reason of mankind. As evidence that this maxim, according to the general convictions of mankind, is applicable only to that mental and bodily action which follows choice, and not to choice itself, it has been alleged, 'that the more determined, incorrigible, and irreclaimable a sinner is in his wickedness, — the more deliberate, unmixed, inveterate, and invincible his wickedness is, and the greater his *inability* is, then the greater is his guilt, and the more deserving is he of severe punishment, and the more ready and unhesitating is every one to form the judgment of condemnation.' — Ibid. pp. 281, 282.

In reply, let it be observed that inability to do right, and determined and persistent wickedness, do not stand together in the same person. Men do not more readily condemn; they do not even condemn a man at all for not doing what they know he has no ability to do.

Such assumptions, boldly asserted, have much influence with many minds. But before we are carried away with them, let us inquire, —

Why does every one more readily and severely condemn a sinner, the more deliberate, determined, inveterate, and incorrigible he is in unmixed wickedness?

The reason why we more readily condemn, and why we enhance our condemnation of any one on account of his more deliberate, determined, persistent, and unmixed wickedness, is not that he had no ability to refrain from sinning, but because of the accumulated evidence of the more atrocious abuse of his ability, manifested in perversely and obstinately choosing what he might and should have persistently refused, and because we regard him as having ample power to avoid the conduct we condemn. And the reason of *all* this is, that all, even sinful choice, the world over, implies in its very nature power to make a contrary choice to the one which is made.

It seems a great and evident mistake, as to what the common sense of mankind in regard to this maxim is, to suppose that it is not applied by them to all cases of duty. If the act of any being must be what it is by an invincible necessity, — if, when

he performs the act in question, he has no power to the contrary, — common sense, sound and unperverted reason, must and forever will affirm that such an act is neither sinful nor virtuous, and for that act that being can be worthy of neither praise nor blame.

7. Strange as it may seem, learned theologians, in the same Princeton Essays, p. 257, have entered upon a direct argument to prove that when men choose, they have at the time no power to make a contrary choice instead of the one which is made. And their main argument amounts to this, that there is no conceivable way in which a contrary choice could be made but in choosing by a previous choice to make it, and that there is no way to make the previous choice but by a previous choice, thus involving the impossibility of an infinite series of previous choices. This argument is sufficiently answered by the consideration that an infinite series is no more requisite to make a *different* choice, than it is to make the one which is made, and that is not at all.

Further to prove this point, these men raise these questions: —

"Who will claim that it is deemed necessary that they should have the property of choosing the exact contrary of what on the whole appears most eligible and desirable? So far from being essential to, would not such a property be declared by them destructive of all responsibility?" "If, then, the will is in a given moral state, how can it be a property of it to put forth choices of an opposite moral character? Is this a real requisite or a desirable appendage to moral agency?" — Princeton Essays, pp. 254, 255.

The prevailing desires, inclinations, and temptations of some men lead them on in constant rebellion against God. Now is it a *requisite*, necessary, or desirable appendage to responsibility and moral agency to have the power to resist temptation, to repent of sin, and to obey the commands of God? Certainly.

The prevailing desires, inclinations, temptations, and strongest motives (if you please) of some men, lead them to become and continue for a long time gluttons, drunkards, and debauchees.

Now, can it be desirable that such men should have power adequate to resist these desires, motives, and temptations which now prevail, and to yield to those motives, desires, and considerations which ought to be the prevailing motives with them to become good citizens and the servants of God?

To ask these questions is to answer them. If there could be any possible doubt on this point, it ought to be removed at once and forever by the command of God: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." Mark 12: 30.

When summed up, to what do the seven last considered forms of doctrine amount?

Although the seven forms of doctrine last considered were not so intended by their supporters, yet they appear to consist substantially in seven modes of denying, or at least of asserting what is inconsistent with, the first principle of moral obligation, that what ought to be done can be done; and they amount to a denial that when we make a given sinful choice we have the power of making a contrary holy choice, and they imply a denial that a holy choice is a free, unnecessitated act. And this amounts to a virtual denial of the doctrine of free, voluntary, responsible agency, which all men know to be true.

The denial of power to the contrary is virtually denying the power to choose at all, for where only one way is possible no choice is possible, and therefore this is a denial of the self-evident proposition, What ought to be done can be done. This is to deny a first principle of human belief.

What is fatalism?

The doctrine that the actions of men are caused by that which is to them an unavoidable, invincible, and irresistible necessity, is fatalism.

The doctrine that men have no power to the contrary choice, or to act otherwise than they do, — that sinners have no ability of *any kind* to keep the commandments of God, as held by Dr. Wilson, the accuser of Dr. Beecher before the Presbytery of Cincinnati, — that sinners are not able in *any sense* to do their duty, as held by Dr. Junkin, the accuser of Rev. Albert

Barnes,* — that impenitent sinners have no power to do what God requires, as held by Dr. Joseph Harvey, the compiler of the East Windsor creed, — the doctrine that God maintains an irresistible, unqualified, absolute control over all the desires, emotions, feelings, thoughts, and actions of men, as once was taught at East Windsor,† so that all these take place according to his supreme preference, choice, and will, is fatalism. The doctrine that God has a perfect and unlimited power of control over all the action of human beings, and that, by this power, he maintains an absolute dominion over, and exercises an entire and irresistible control of, all the thoughts, feelings, dispositions, motives, and springs of action, as well as over the hearts and all the actions of his accountable creatures (as some men teach), is fatalism, unmitigated fatalism. That man, as a moral agent, is absolutely dependent upon God's unlimited control over his conduct, his intellect, and heart, is fatalism, notwithstanding it is so much inculcated in reviews, in preaching, and in books on mental science.

These different forms of statement involve the *irresistible, natural necessity*, that all human action should be just what it is. And this necessity is fatalism. It matters not what the ground of this necessity is, nor by what name you call it, whether moral certainty, moral or natural necessity, divine sovereignty, divine efficiency, God's control, decrees, or decretive will, *or the universal reign of causation*, — the doctrine that men, in their moral doings, act under a necessity which is irresistible by any power which they possess, is fatalism, downright fatalism.

By saying this, it is not meant that there is not a true doctrine of divine sovereignty and divine decrees, on which the *certainty* of all events depends, but we mean that any statement which logically leads to, or necessarily involves the doctrine of the inevitable, natural necessity of men's conduct, so that they have no power adequate to do their duty, is fatalism, and is not

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* Trials which came off in the Presbyterian General Assembly, from 1835 to 1838.

† Dr. Tyler's Review of Dr. Day on the Will, p. 4.

supported by reason, nor by divine authority. No way of escape from this result can be opened by saying that fatalism "is a natural necessity arising from the existence of things in themselves independent of any voluntary or controlling agency." This is only one form of fatalism. The doctrine that the actions of men are necessitated by an invincible necessity, is fatalism also, whether that necessity arises from any voluntary controlling agency, or from any involuntary cause or fate. *So far as I am dependent on and controlled by any irresistible power or cause whatever, I am not free nor responsible. And so far as I am free, I am not* THUS *dependent.*

To affirm of the Scriptures that "they throw the moral world into the hands of God as really and as entirely as the natural world, [that] they represent him as controlling both alike, according to his pleasure," is to make them teach *fatalism.* — Am. Theol. Review, Aug. 1859, p. 401.

So far as free, responsible agency is concerned, this is fatalism as downright and positive as language can well express. Every thing in the natural world, every particle of matter in the universe, when not influenced by the power of creatures, is just as God makes it to be, and it moves and acts (so far as it may be said to act) just as, according to his pleasure, he causes it to move and act, by a resistless causation, — a perfect and absolute control. Every rational and enlightened conscience knows that in the world of *moral agency* this is not so. Mind is not matter. Men are not machines. Responsible mind is not thus controlled. And, therefore, to make the Scriptures teach that men are thus controlled, is to make them affirm what every enlightened, unprejudiced mind, in the exercise of common sense and sound reason, knows not to be true. The Bible itself most plainly contradicts this interpretation and understanding of its teachings. The apostle Peter affirms, "God is not willing that *any* should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter, 3 : 9. God himself, by the mouth of his prophet Ezekiel, says, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he should turn and live." Ez. 33 : 11. So we see, on Divine authority, God does not control the wicked to

act according as he plainly asserts that it is his pleasure they should act. After all that God has said of his pleasure that men should not go on in sin and perish, but that they should come to repentance, — should turn and live, — they do sin on and perish in their sin; therefore, not by his control.

What comprehensive answer can be given to each and all of the seven doctrines above discussed?

Substantially the same answer is valid against each of these seven forms of doctrine.

They each and all lead to fatalism. If they are true, no created being can do otherwise than just as he does. If fatalism is false, they are. If they are true, there is no such thing among men as choice, or power of choice, or moral agency, or moral obligation, or right or wrong, or holiness or sin, which notions are contradicted by the common sense and universal consciousness of mankind.

SECTION II.

POWER OF CONTRARY CHOICE.

The August number of the American Theological Review, 1859, contains an article *on the power of contrary choice*, which says, "The importance of a thorough examination of this notion is the greater, in that the whole scheme to which it belongs stands or falls with it." *Very true.* The Review proceeds, "A wider influence is now at work to turn away the minds of ministers and churches from the Calvinistic doctrines, than was ever before seen in the course of the history of New England. And we have the germ of the whole system here antagonizing with Calvinism, in the phrase which we have so imperfectly expounded."

On page 417 it is said, "This phrase, first pronounced, as far as we can ascertain, by Dr. Taylor, has been gaining currency for about a third of a century." These two solemn affirmations by such authority, do not look as though the (*supposed*) peculiarities of Dr. Taylor were fast dying out, and soon to be *only*

among the things that were, as the Boston Recorder and Princeton Review would fain make the world believe. "Let this germ be displaced from the common mind, and the rest will disappear." So we think, but *hic labor est:* it will be a task to do this.

Again, the Am. Theol. Review says, "We know of very little that has been written and published in argument for it. We would be glad to see such an argument." — pp. 433, 434.

We very cheerfully obey the call and accept the implied challenge. And the first argument we here present, in proof of the plenary power of contrary choice, shall be in the expressive words of him who spake as never man spake: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy *strength*."

Impenitent sinners choose a life of sin. This command requires them to use *their* strength in making the contrary choice of a life of love to God. The strength or power, the terms being synonymous, is theirs, now in their possession, and, of course, it was not destroyed by, nor in, the fall of Adam. The same thing precisely is required of sinners in all the commands in the Bible, to repent and turn themselves, and to be converted, and to cast away all their transgressions, and to make a new heart and a new spirit. To do the thing which is required in these various forms of command, is to use their power of contrary choice, in making a choice contrary to their present choice. God required the same thing by his servant Joshua, when he said, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve."

These instances of a "Thus saith the Lord," are better than a thousand metaphysical arguments to those who cannot understand metaphysics.

For our second argument, we refer our friends of the Am. Theol. Review to our whole treatise, one of the main designs of which is to prove that the power of choice, or, if you please, the power of contrary choice (both being one and the same thing), is included in the only possible basis of moral obligation. It is one of the plainest dictates of common sense, that when and where a given act is unavoidable, there being no

adequate power of a contrary choice, there neither is nor can be any power of choice at all in reference to the act supposed, and for this most conclusive reason, there can be no obligation. What can be plainer to him who knows what choice is, than that choice between good and evil implies both power to choose the good, and also power to choose the evil, power to choose *one*, being the same thing, precisely identical, with power to choose the *other*, — the power of choice and the power of contrary choice being simply and absolutely essential to free, responsible agency.*

Suppose, now, that it be a real truth, that when a man makes what we call a wicked choice, he is bound by an absolutely unavoidable, invincible necessity to make that choice (call it by whatever name, — moral necessity if you please), whether it be the first act of moral agency or not, and that he is bound by an absolute impossibility, and by an unavoidable, invincible necessity not to make the contrary and opposite choice, it seems to us that nothing can be plainer than that in such a case a man or a child cannot be a responsible, free agent, to choose between good and evil. "Man is not a link in the necessary chain of material nature. He is a free creature; capable of continuing

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* We hope the Am. Theol. Review will well consider our arguments, and if found to be true and sound, admit to be true such of them as are so, but refute any and all that are not so. If they will do this to our understanding, we will join with our friends in their repudiation. Truth is dearer to us than triumph in the wrong. It has been said of our work that "it is labor to bring forth the wind." Now if it should be truly and fairly refuted, it will in one sense at least accomplish this result to good purpose, and the truth would be better understood.

As the Am. Theol. Review "is intended to meet the wants of [*those* churches that accept the . . . Shorter Catechism," we hope this Review will pay particular attention to instruct *those* churches on that feature of the Catechism which implies *only* a limited atonement, and if these churches *want* a Saviour that died for the world, and "tasted death for every man," showing that if he died for all, then were all dead, we hope this Review will fulfil its *intention* to meet that *want*, by bringing out the fact that Jesus Christ died for the whole world, and by making this fact *stand* out, the Larger Catechism to the contrary notwithstanding.

holy as he was created, or of turning to sin." — Prof. Shedd, Bib. Sac. 1859, p. 740. Therefore wicked moral agents have the power of contrary choice.

Our next argument on this point shall be drawn from the *necessity* of yielding to the dictates, and satisfying the demands of common sense, manifested in the East Windsor creed, which says, "Man has understanding and natural strength to do all that God requires." If so, then those men who choose the service of Satan, have natural strength or real adequate power, which is exactly the same thing, to make the opposite choice of the service of God, which he requires them to do. We are aware that East Windsor men explain away this part of their creed so as, in our view, to make it mean nothing which the terms of it properly convey, or which, in the eye of common sense, is true. We hope the day is coming, and close at hand, when this question shall be brought before the minds of the people, and kept there, till they see and suitably appreciate the truth in regard to it, and make their appreciation of it felt, by those who seek the office and employment of religious teachers. We intend to do what we can for this end.

Our inquiry now shall be, do our friends of the Am. Theol. Review deny the power of contrary choice, which we claim to be essential to any and every possible basis of the moral obligation of sinners to obey the requirements of heaven?

We have endeavored *so* to explain this power to the contrary, as to leave none of that *elasticity* in it, of which these reviewers complain.

They say, "It has such an elasticity about it, that if taken up to express simply a natural ability, it, by a force residing in itself, overleaps the bound, and expresses a [*moral* ability. For, strictly speaking, a power to choose, if we mean any thing more than an abstract faculty of choosing, involves a moral power." A [*mere* natural ability to choose is a solecism in languages. An ability *to choose*, whether in a direct or contrary choice, is, by force of the terms, more than a natural, it is a moral ability."

In reply, we say, that a *mere abstract faculty of choosing*, which, having the proper opportunity, is not adequate

to choose, is a mere nonentity, a nothing but an unthinkable absurdity.

Having quoted Pres. Edwards with approbation, they say, "According to these definitions a power of actually choosing is a moral ability. A natural ability to choose, is an ability to choose *if we will*, or an ability that becomes an ability to choose as soon as we do choose, and not before; and as in the case of the power of contrary choice, we never do choose it, so it is no ability at all." — pp. 423, 424. "The nonsense of the term *ability to choose if he will choose*, . . . prevents its going to any purpose at all." — p. 425.

That which is here termed and defined as a natural ability to choose, is nothing but a natural inability to choose. Power or ability to choose must exist logically before it can be put forth in choice, therefore if it does not exist before it is put forth in choosing, it can never exist at all.

On p. 422 our reviewers say, "The word power usually includes the possibility of doing a thing." True, without meaning this, it can mean nothing that has any sense in it.

Again; another argument, to prove there is no such thing in man as power to the contrary choice, is the assumption that it is never exerted.

The language of the Am. Theol. Review, in the last half of the nineteenth century, is as follows, to wit: "That which makes it infallibly certain that . . . [the infant] will make a sinful choice, excludes the [*possibility*, the *posse*, of his making a holy choice. Then how do you know that this power of contrary choice exists, when you concede that in all acts of the will, in all intelligent beings in the universe, never an instance occurred or could occur, wherein it came into exercise? . . . It is conceded that this power of contrary choice never was exerted and never will be. How then do we know that it exists?"

Viewing this argumentation in its true light, what does it amount to? e. g. A man has no power to think or to know any thing which he never does think or know, because he never does think or know any thing which he never does think or

know. Or thus, a man has no power to choose or to do any thing which he never chooses to do, because he never chooses to do that which he never chooses to do. We think that all *that* class of men, whose opinions are controlled by reason, common sense, and the Bible, will never be convinced by such an argument, certainly if they look at the argument till they understand it.

These citations we have made from this Am. Theol. Review, are thus seen, taken together, to prove the full denial, by our friends, of the power of contrary choice in any intelligent being in the universe. Now, if all this be true and there be no escape from it, then we are most manifestly landed in universal and inextricable fatalism. The argument to prove this conclusion we by no means admit, viz., that this power of contrary choice is never exerted.

If, as we claim abundantly to have proved, this power of contrary choice is included in, and is nothing but the power of choice between good and evil, then it is exerted in every moral choice. If the self-evident, infallibly certain truism, in regard to every being in the universe, God himself not excepted, that he never performs an act which he never performs, proves that no being has power to do differently from what he does, then free responsible agency is nothing but a name. That which ends in absurdity, must be founded in absurdity.

We are confident in the opinion, that if this denial by the Am. Theol. Review of the power of contrary choice could be substantiated, it would afford a better argument for the support of atheism than any other that was ever yet invented. If there be not in man a power that renders right doing to him a real possibility, then there is no basis for moral obligation, nor for a righteous moral government over the world, and then we should have no evidence that there is a righteous God. If advancing arguments which lead or tend to atheism were a sufficient ground for withholding fellowship, we should reject some from our fellowship whom we are willing now to regard as real, though mistaken, deluded Christians — deluded by spurious metaphysics.

There seems to be another fallacy about this argument from the certainty that a choice will never be made which is contrary to all the choices which are certain ever to be made, and that fallacy arises from confounding the idea of an unfailing certainty, a certainty which merely *will* not fail, with an infallible necessity which *can neither fail nor be made* to fail. The former, i. e. the mere certainty of action, is consistent with freedom of action, and with that power to the contrary choice which is involved in and is essential to free agency; while an *infallible necessity*, that *cannot* be removed, is not and cannot be consistent with duty or obligation, or responsibility or blame, not even if you call it a *moral* necessity. Prefixing the term *moral* to necessity, does not change it from the most absolute and invincible necessity.

The attempted distinction between natural and moral ability and inability, and between natural and moral necessity, is such an arbitrary and abusive use of language, that it has led to great confusion of ideas, and to an indefinite and contradictory use, meaning, and understanding of these terms, moral necessity, moral ability and inability, so that they ought to be banished from the language.

To show up the absurdity of the claim that the power of contrary choice is never used, let us take this illustration. Suppose a man able to lift five hundred pounds weight and no more, and that, having two such weights before him, he lifts one of them. Is not the power to lift the one he does lift, also power to lift the other? and is not the power by which he chooses to lift one, power to choose to lift the other? Or, suppose again, he at one time chooses to lift one and at another time the other, is it not the same power by which he makes these opposite choices? Is not the power by which he makes one choice and lifts one weight, the same with that by which he makes the other and contrary choice, and lifts the other weight? Now, suppose that he says two and two are four and two are six, and chooses to stop there. Again, he says two and two are four and two are six and two are eight, and chooses to stop there, — is not the power by which he makes one of these choices iden-

tical with that by which he makes the other and contrary choice? No unprejudiced mind, we think, can doubt it. So when sinners choose to serve God, is it not with the same powers with which they had before practised sin?

But these reviewers claim that, according to their doctrine, there is a sufficient basis for obligation in man. Their claim is in these words: "When we say that one has an ability to do a thing, *if he will*, — i. e. has natural ability to do it, though his inclinations are hopelessly set against it, — we say what is needful to show that the obligation to do it is complete upon him."

Here, then, we have the important and decisive concession, that ability to do, in some proper sense of ability, is indispensably needful to the basis of any and all obligation. But this is in contradiction to what they have elsewhere said, viz. "that natural ability to choose is a solecism in language. An ability *to choose*, whether in a direct or contrary choice, is, by force of the terms, more than a natural, — it is a moral ability." "A natural ability to choose is [only] an ability to choose, *if we will*." Now if we *will not*, then it is *not* an *ability* to choose, just "as in the case of the power of contrary choice we never do choose it, — so it is no ability at all." Here, then, we leave this matter, with a perfect conviction that no rational being on earth, in the exercise of common sense, will ever believe that *no ability at all* is a basis of moral obligation. Therefore, according to the Am. Theol. Review, there is no basis in man for moral obligation. Now, we see not why their system, being without a basis of moral obligation, is not in as bad a plight as ours would be without the power of contrary choice. According to the adage, it is a poor rule that will not work both ways.

Once more; the Am. Theol. Review says: "We grant that all sin is voluntary, in several senses of the term."

Very well. We most heartily say *amen* to this, that all sin is voluntary. And we infer with certainty, therefore, that it cannot, in any possible case, precede all voluntary action and all consent of the will. Now, therefore, when these gentlemen of the Review attempt to prove, from what Paul says about lust and

concupiscence, "that the [*propensity to* sin which goes before the act of the will, [*is* sin," they make him contradict themselves, and all common sense besides.

We hold that the truth *that all sin is voluntary* is self-evident to every one who fairly understands it, and therefore the doctrine of original sin, in all the multitudinous and opposite senses in which its sticklers state it, is contrary both to Scripture and reason. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ez. 18: 20), but not unless it *sins* (all sin being voluntary) by its own *voluntary* act of sinning.

To grant that all sin is voluntary, and then to claim that it precedes all acts of will, seems like an attempt to gain the benefit of such an admission, without in reality consistently adhering to it. To deny that sin is voluntary, is revolting to the popular mind.

C.

[Note C. Referred to, p. 112.]

EXTRACTS ON MORAL GOVERNMENT FROM PROF. FINNEY'S THEOLOGY, OBERLIN EDITION, 1846. — PROF. FINNEY'S AND PRES. MAHAN'S VIEWS COMPARED.

"*Utility* is an attribute of moral law." "Law proposes the highest good of universal being as its end, and requires all moral agents to consecrate themselves to the promotion of this end. Consequently, utility must be one of its attributes." — p. 15. "That which is upon the whole for the highest good of the universe, must be demanded by moral law." — p. 18.

"The contemplation by us of the joys of others may be and often is the means of increasing our own. In this case the ultimate good is both an ultimate and a relative good; that is, it is both an ultimate end and a means. . . . Our nature demands satisfaction, blessedness, enjoyment. This is an ultimate demand." — p. 50.

"It has been strangely and absurdly maintained that right

would be obligatory if it necessarily tended to and resulted in universal and perfect misery, than which a more nonsensical affirmation was never made." — p. 18.

Tendency to good, then, we infer, must be one element in the foundation of law and moral obligation.

"Expediency is an attribute of law, . . . that which is upon the whole most expedient is right, and that which is right is expedient." — p. 17.

The doctrine of benevolent utility, as we understand it, is implied in the above statements.

Prof. Finney thinks "there is a fundamental difference between the condition and ground of obligation. . . . For example; the possession of the powers of moral agency is the [*condition* of the obligation to choose the highest good of being in general as an ultimate end for its own sake. But the intrinsic value of this good [chosen] is the [*ground* of the obligation [to choose it]. This obligation could not exist without the possession of these powers; but the possession of these powers cannot of itself create the obligation to choose the good in preference to the ill of being. The intrinsic difference between the good and ill of being is the ground of the obligation to will the one rather than the other." — London Ed. p. 27.

We think there is not just ground for this distinction, and that it tends to confusion. Intrinsic good cannot of itself create obligation that it should be chosen, any more than the possession of the powers of moral agency can of *itself*, when there is no good to be chosen, create obligation to choose that good. Therefore, both the value of the *good* and the *powers* of moral agency, *knowledge*, and *opportunity*, are essential to the ground of obligation. And further, this distinction between the ground and condition of obligation is inconsistent with the following correct and important statements of Prof. Finney himself: "*Moral law is a rule of action founded in the nature and relation of moral beings, sustained by sanctions equal to the merit of obedience and the guilt of disobedience.*"

"Another attribute of law is *practicability*. That which the precept demands must be practicable to the subject. That

which demands a natural impossibility is not and cannot be moral law."

"Another attribute of moral law is *independence*. It is [*founded* in the self-existent nature of God. It is an eternal and necessary idea of the divine reason. It is the eternal, self-existent rule of the divine conduct, the law which the intelligence of God prescribes to himself." — Ibid. p. 11.

Since law and obligation are essentially the same (obligation being the binding power of law, law without obligation being nothing), that which is the ground or foundation of one must be of both. The *sine qua non* of obligation must be a ground, as well as a condition of it. We think most surely that Prof. Finney, in the true and proper sense, as we understand it, is a *utilitarian*. The sense in which he opposes utility is not the true and proper sense of benevolent utility, but the sense of a selfish utility, which is not properly, on the whole, *utility* at all, but in reality a *detriment* in the end.

In confirmation of these last remarks, we make the following extracts from the Science of Logic, by Asa Mahan, D. D.: —

"Prof. Finney fully agrees with myself [Mahan] in rejecting the doctrine of utility." — p. 259. Pres. Mahan thinks that Prof. Finney is quite inconsistent with himself in rejecting the doctrine of utility.

"The advocates of this [Pres. Mahan's] theory agree with Prof. Finney in the doctrine that the good of being is the ultimate reason for ultimate intentions of a certain class, to wit, all intentions included in willing the good of being." Now, as this class includes all good ultimate intentions which are possible to the mind of man, this is a good and sufficient ground for a full agreement of the parties in the true sense of the doctrine of *benevolent utility*.

"On the other hand, they [Pres. Mahan and his friends] affirm that there are other objects, such as virtue and sin, moral character, moral desert, etc., which contain ultimate reasons for *certain acts of will* or ultimate intentions besides happiness as a good in itself. Here, and here only, is there a difference of opinion." — p. 261.

The difference between Finney and Mahan on this point, as we understand it, is this, that Finney holds that these objects last named are real, important, and essential reasons for action, but that they are not *ultimate* (as Mahan holds); but that the *satisfaction* found in right acts, and the happiness promoted by them, are, in the order of nature, ultimate, i. e. ulterior to right intentions in all cases whatsoever, and that this personal satisfaction, and the general good in their intrinsic value, are essential elements in the ground of obligation. That this last view, to wit, that one element in the foundation of obligation consists in the value of the highest good, it has been the labor of our treatise to establish on a permanent basis; while we also claim that ability to promote that good is included in the foundation of obligation.

From a careful examination of the above statements, and of the writings, to some extent, of both these gentlemen, our conclusion is, that if they were logically consistent each with himself, they would agree with each other in holding and teaching the doctrine of *benevolent utility.* That this is the real doctrine of Prof. Finney, and that too very ably and clearly defended (with the exception of some little inconsistency, and not permitting it to be called by its true name), we cannot doubt.

D.

[Note D. Referred to, p. 159.]

VIEWS OF THE PRINCETON AND THE AMERICAN THEOLOGICAL REVIEWS.

It is quite pleasant to learn from gentlemen of the Princeton Review, and to hear them say, that the dogma "that 'sin is the necessary means of the greatest good,' is for them to maintain who avow it. This is no part of our theology."

And yet what is thereafter said seems very little, if any, to fall short of implying this doctrine, viz. "It is quite certain that

redemption is the grandest outshining of the perfections and glories of God." "It is equally certain that redemption and God's declarative glory therein, are impossible without sin." — July, 1859, p. 514.

Sin, then, according to these statements, is necessary to the grandest outshining of the perfection and glories of the Deity, so that universal perfection in holiness would have prevented the grandest display of God's perfections which, without sin, could not have been made. What is this but making sin the necessary means of the greatest good, and making God dependent on sin for the highest, grandest display and greatest promotion of his own glory. Were it not for the inconsistency which follows the rejection of this revolting dogma, the voluntary repudiation of it *from this quarter* would afford gratifying evidence that an encouraging reformation in theology is going on in the world. And yet this *avowal*, after all, proves that the peculiarities of New Haven views have not as yet begun *to die out*, as this Review would fain make the world believe. We think our Princeton friends will find it difficult to extricate this doctrine from the Calvinistic system, without making essential modifications and important improvements in that system. To do this, however, will be comparatively easy, since Dr. Taylor has paved the way by his teachings, and by the death blow which he gave to this odious notion of man's device in his *Concio* of 1828, in a note on this topic.

Certain sentiments, when plainly expressed, are revolting to the common sense and feelings of men. Certain others are adapted to secure common approbation, when fairly and plainly expressed. When men hold the first kind of these opinions and reject the latter, it is natural for them still to try to obtain the advantage of the acceptable words and forms of expressions, and to avoid the disadvantage of those which are revolting and repulsive. For an example of the first kind, "Sin is the necessary means of the greatest good;" for one of the second, "All sin is voluntary."

Our brethren of the Am. Theol. Review reject the first of these expressions, by saying sin "came into the universe, . . .

not because it was the necessary means of the greatest good." And yet they say that "sin and redemption were permitted to have a place in the great plan of God, because he saw that, notwithstanding incidental evils, this was the best conceivable plan, — the plan most glorious to himself, and best calculated to promote the good of the intelligent universe on the whole." And further, they say "it is easy to see that the existence of sin may be made an ultimate gain to the universe, — an unspeakable gain." — pp. 409, 410.

What can all this fine phraseology mean, but that sin is, after all, the necessary means of the greatest good? Is not all this actually implied? If it be so, as is in these quotations stated, certainly *holiness* is not the necessary means of the greatest good, because if perfect holiness had universally prevailed, according to the law and earnest requirements of God, the great and unspeakable gain obtained by having sin in this plan would by this holiness have been prevented.

We leave it for gentlemen of the Am. Theol. Review and the Princeton Review to explain why they reject this phrase, and still claim that sin is necessary to the best plan for good to the universe; and also why they of the Am. Theol. Review assert that "all sin is voluntary," and still hold that in some cases it precedes all acts of will. — pp. 420, 421.

When Dr. John W. Webster was executed for the murder of Dr. Parkman, the community saw and felt and rejoiced in, that glorious and impartial exhibition of justice, and of the power and majesty of the law, put forth for the protection of the public weal, the prosperity, the interests, property, and lives of the citizens. So when God sustains his authority and protects the interests and well-being of the subjects of his kingdom, by executing the penalty of his law, and when, by redemption, he saves sinners from sin and death and hell, we rejoice in the glories and majesty of his reign thus exhibited.

But suppose, in the case of Webster, he had supported the law by his obedience, and that he had promoted the public welfare by doing right; who would prefer to this his murder of Dr. Parkman, that he might rejoice in the glories and

majesty of the law in protecting the community from the results of that murder? So in the case of sin and its penalty executed upon irreclaimable sinners, and remitted in the case of the reclaimed and redeemed; who would sacrifice the glories and bliss of a perfect heaven, with a perfect God reigning over it, for all the glory obtained in consequence, and occasioned by the existence of sin, in redemption and in the sufferings of hell?

Who cannot see that the glories and bliss of a perfectly holy and happy kingdom, excel those of a kingdom marred by sin and eternal misery, notwithstanding all the justice displayed in the latter.

If it were possible for any being to secure the holiness and consequent bliss of a perfect heaven, including in it all the rational beings in the universe, who would be willing to exchange it for the events which do and *will* take place in the present series, at the expense of all the sin and consequent suffering and misery of hell involved therein?

But before we adopt the conclusion of the Princeton Review and of the Am. Theol. Review, let us, as we may be able, carefully contemplate the transcendent glories of an all-perfect God, reigning in perfect holiness, over a universe of perfectly holy beings, consecrated with all their powers to the doing of God's will, as most sincerely and earnestly expressed in the laws of nature, in the reason and very constitution of our being, which he has given us, and in his revealed Word, and in his solemnly expressed commandments, and thus coöperating with God to the full extent of all their powers, in promoting happiness to all eternity throughout the whole extent of Jehovah's kingdom. Who can take all this fairly into view, and behold all the powers of all the rational beings God has ever made, and ever will make, or might have made (had there been no sin to be counteracted and put down), *united* with the utmost exertions of Omnipotent wisdom and goodness, in promoting for eternity that happiness which results from holiness, — who could thus behold all the powers of God and of the universe of rational beings thus united for the promotion of the most

valuable end, by the most valuable means which, according to his own testimony, God could devise; and then, without consummate arrogance, or consummately bewildered folly, dare to affirm, *There is a better way?*

We are glad to see the views of opposing brethren of the Am. Theol. Review expressed in so good a spirit. We do not expect generally to see a better spirit exhibited by those who are found on the wrong side of truth, believing that they are controlled in all their acts by an agency not their own, as much and as irresistibly as the world of matter is thus controlled.

E.

[Note E. referred to p. 173.]

SECTION I.

ANTI-UTILITARIAN THEORIES DISCUSSED.

The utilitarian doctrine of Benevolent Rectitude, or that holiness is relative, and not absolute nor ultimate good, implies that utility, or the promotion of happiness, is the ultimate object of virtue, and that useful tendency is one essential element in the foundation of moral obligation; and, therefore, that right is a relative rather than an absolute idea.

The utilitarian feature of this doctrine is opposed by three anti-utilitarian theories, which are worthy of *special* notice in this investigation. These theories give rise to various objections, in various forms, to the doctrine of benevolent utility, the most weighty of which we mean to notice and expect to remove. This may not be so difficult to be done as might be imagined, since these theories not only overturn each other, but as we expect to show, the truth contained in each overthrows the errors contained in itself.

I. The first theory that shall receive attention is *directly*

opposed to the idea that virtue consists in *benevolence*. According to this theory, as its supporters claim, "Absurdity is . . . inherently rooted in the doctrine itself, of greatest happiness as the ultimate end. The important defect of the whole theory is that it can give no moral system." — Bib. Sac. 1856, p. 68, an article by L. P. Hickok, D. D. "Duty is end in and of itself." 'Holiness must be not a means but an end, not a utility, not a want, but an end to the exclusion of all ends ulterior to itself, and, therefore, itself must be the ultimate, — the last end of itself.' — Pres. Quar. Rev. 1855, pp. 436, 455. Therefore, according to this theory, happiness of any kind or degree cannot be the ultimate, final object of virtue. The spirit's worthiness is the ultimate object of virtue, not the *happiness* of the agent, nor of any other being, nor of all beings together. And the ultimate rule of duty according to this theory is, *Act worthy of the rational spirit that you are, — act according to your spirit's worthiness and dignity.*

How, then, does this theory overturn itself?

1. Virtue, according to this theory, is free, voluntary action, and now, since voluntary action of all kinds must by inevitable necessity always have an object ulterior to the action itself, there can be no holy action which has not an object ulterior to itself.

2. By the showing of its own able and ardent supporters, the ultimate subjective object of this spirit worthiness is that happy state of *complacency* and *satisfaction* by which the sentiment of the reason is filled, constituting the *happiness*, — the *enjoyment* found in the love of right.

Thus it is proved that holiness is a utility and a want, and happiness is, after all, because it must be by the most absolute necessity in the unchangeable nature of holiness, as well as by the showing of its supporters, the ultimate, final, subjective object of holy action. In this way this worthiness theory of rectitude overthrows itself, and establishes the main principle of the utilitarian doctrine of benevolent rectitude, viz. that happiness is the ultimate object of virtue. This worthiness theory will be more fully considered in another place. (E. sec. 3).

Let it here be carefully observed, that the principle that holy action has no end or object ulterior to itself, is completely demolished by one half of the next theory to be noticed. After having discussed the next theory we shall return to a more particular consideration of this theory, called "Worthiness of Spiritual Approbation."

II. The next theory of the nature of virtue to be noticed is that set forth by several gentlemen whose names are not given to the public, in a very able review of Pres. Edwards on the Nature of Virtue in the Bibliotheca Sacra, 1853. As in this review this theory is more distinctly stated and ably supported, in our judgment, than in any other publication within our knowledge, with unfeigned respect we propose, for the purpose of designation, to term it the *Bibliothecan theory* of the nature of virtue.

The fundamental principle of this theory is, that "in point of time the last good aimed at [in holiness] is the general happiness." This implies that "All virtue consists in benevolence." — pp. 721–723. Thus far this is, as it claims to be, in accordance and identical with the doctrine of Edwards, and (as we judge), is most undeniably true. So incontestably true is this position, that it may be regarded as a complete demolition of the worthiness theory above considered, it being self-evident if *this* is right, *that* is wrong, the two theories being contradictory. The doctrine of Pres. Edwards on the nature of virtue, must be overthrown before the worthiness theory can be admitted.

What is the other part of this theory now under consideration?

The second part of the Bibliothecan theory is that the essence of virtue does not consist at all in any *tendency* to secure the highest amount of general happiness — that the true doctrine (as to the nature of virtue) is not *utilitarian*, in short, that the *tendency* of *virtue* to secure its object does not belong to its *nature*. This last part of this theory we regard as opposed to the Edwardean theory, as well as to the first part of itself. The idea that virtue has for its ultimate design and object the *greatest possible utility*, or the promotion of highest general and indi-

vidual happiness, is evidently inconsistent with the notion that utility does not belong to the nature of virtue. That the two parts of this theory are logically and psychologically inconsistent with each other, and that the first part of the theory is true and completely subversive of the other, — that the first is utilitarian and that the last is anti-utilitarian, we shall endeavor to show in the progress of this investigation.

Leaving, then, for the present the general consideration of these theories, we proceed to examine various forms of objection to the true doctrine, which are derived from them, as well as from a third theory, or that form of the Kantial theory held by Cousin, which is to be examined in the sequel.

What, then, may be considered some of the most important specific objections, which spring from the anti-utilitarian theories, and which have been raised against the doctrine that holiness is relative, but not ultimate nor absolute good, — that the desire of happiness is the primary subjective motive, and happiness the ultimate object of virtuous action?

Obj. I. The most plausible objection to the doctrine that holiness is relative good, within our knowledge, perhaps, is that *holiness is a good in itself.* Dr. Emmons, it is said, "believed that rectitude, apart from any benefits connected with it, is the greatest good," (Works, vol. 1, p. 148); and that free moral exercises are good or evil [*in themselves*, without any regard to the cause that produced them or the effect that follows them, vol. 4. p. 228. To the same effect, an able anonymous writer has said, "The love of the general happiness is a good in itself, and does not derive its goodness merely from its being a means of the general happiness. The love of the general holiness is a good in itself, and does not become such by its mere [*conduciveness* to some other end." — Bib. Sac. 1853, p. 723.

The phrase *good in itself*, "good in itself considered," is not the most definite and unequivocal in its meaning. Pres. Edwards often speaks of virtue as a *good in itself.* He says that virtue "appears *in itself* [*agreeable* and comely, agreeable in itself, and *immediately* [*pleasant.*" "Communicating good to the creatures is what is *in itself* pleasing to God." — Last End, chap. 2, § 5.

Virtue is a good in itself, because in itself it is communicating happiness. Benevolence is a good in itself, because in itself it aims at, and tends to, highest general happiness. "Highest happiness is the consequent of holiness [*only.*" Holiness gives great satisfaction to the soul, it is the joy of heaven; therefore *in itself* it is a relative good. In itself it is a good, because it has the relation to happiness, of being the voluntary means of it. According to Edwards's use of the term, *aiming at is tending to.* He says, "God aims at that which the motion or progression which he causes, [*aims at* or *tends to.*"—Last End, chap. 7, § 7.

The following language of Pres. Edwards is well fitted to show what he meant by a thing's being *good in itself*, when that thing is not happiness itself. "That the true goodness of a thing must be its agreeableness to its end, or its fitness to answer the design for which it was made," (Works, vol. 3, p. 109), and in the case of an action the end for which it is put forth. Now highest general happiness is the end for which benevolent action is put forth, and it *is the consequent of holiness only.* Therefore according to Edwards and sound reason besides, the goodness of benevolence consists in its voluntary fitness and tendency to secure the end for which it is put forth, viz., the highest happiness in the agent's power.

Again: "While Edwards believed that virtue is a good in itself, and vice an evil in itself, he yet believed that the chief good of the creature's virtue consists in its being an object of holy [*pleasure* to the Creator, and a means of manifesting his glory." — Bib. Sac. 1853, p. 722. We agree with Edwards that holiness in this sense is a good in itself, because in itself it is a source of happiness to the Creator and a means of manifesting his glory, which is the same thing as being conducive to the highest happiness of the universe. Because virtue is in itself *agreeable* and comely and immediately *pleasant*, — and because it is thus the source of the highest, purest pleasure, and in many ways the designed cause of good and happiness, it is in itself a relative good and a most glorious and praiseworthy good, and indeed the only praiseworthy good. Thus we arrive at the

conclusion that holiness in its essential nature is relative good, and the highest conceivable *relative*, but never an *absolute* good, independent of all its relations to, including its conduciveness of, happiness; it is never a good *in itself*, in the sense of absolute, ultimate good.

Again: the truth that happiness *is*, and holiness is *not*, *absolute* good, in the strictest sense of absolute, is fully evident in the affirmation that happiness, when once it exists, is good (but not in a moral sense) independent of and separated from all its possible relations, and entirely irrespective of every thing besides itself; while holiness, in its essential nature, has relations on which the possibility of its very existence depends; so that to separate it from these relations, when it comes to be put forth, would be to annihilate the possibility of its existence, — the possibility of its being put forth.

That this conclusion is in accordance with the Edwardean theory, and with the truth also, we think fully appears from the following extract. "It may, therefore, be proper to observe, that let what will be God's last end, *that* he must have a real and proper [*pleasure* in: whatever be the proper object of his will, he is [*gratified* in. And the thing is either [*grateful* to him in itself; or for something else for which he wills it: and so is his further end. But whatever is God's last end, that he wills *for its own sake;* as [*grateful* to him in itself; or which is the same thing, it is that which he truly [*delights in*, or in which he has some degree of true and proper [*pleasure*." "If he is not indifferent, then he is [*truly gratified and pleased* in the fulfilment of his will: or, which is the same thing, he has a [*pleasure* in it. And if he has a real pleasure in attaining his end, then the attainment of it belongs to his [*happiness*." — Last End, chap. 1, § 4.

From all this it is most manifest that, in the view of Pres. Edwards, whatever besides happiness is a *good in itself*, is in itself also a source or means of happiness, and that no rational being can regard any object besides happiness as good in itself, in which he has no pleasure or happiness; and, therefore, that every thing except happiness, separate and apart from all rela-

tions of every kind *to* happiness, is not good in any sense whatever.

To say, as Edwards in substance *has* said, that holiness appears to be a good in itself immediately without [*calculation* of consequences, presents no real difficulty in opposition to this conclusion. That love to sentient beings in general, — the exercise of good-will towards them, will produce some degree of the designed happiness, both to the subjects and objects of that love, is too evident to require *calculation* of consequences, in order to be perceived.

In Edwards's dissertation on the last end of God in creation, he assumed the holiness of God, and, therefore, that which he proved to be *God's* last end is also the legitimate and ultimate objective end of *all* holiness, viz. the highest happiness of the universe, or, which implies the same thing, the glory of God.

We humbly submit that what gives plausibility to the statement that "holiness is a good in itself" (as an argument against our doctrine), and in our view constitutes its real sophistry, is that in one sense it is true, while in another and the only sense pertinent to the case in hand, it is not true. (See sec. 3 of note E. on the phrase, right a good in itself.) It is to us inconceivable that holiness should be a good in itself in any other sense than that it should be in itself a source or cause of happiness.

Obj. II. Perhaps the most common and most weighty objection to the doctrine that benevolence has highest happiness for its ultimate object, is 'that it logically leads to and is therefore founded in selfishness.'

This objection is thus stated in the Presbyterian Quarterly Review: "It is hard to oppose logically this happiness scheme, and yet we do not hesitate to say that reason and conscience revolt at it." "When carried out [it] annihilates all morality, by destroying the last logical difference between it and a wise or an unwise [*selfishness.*" — 1855, pp. 456, 442.

That the doctrine of benevolent utility leads to selfishness, we believe is the grand objection most commonly urged against it. We apprehend that this objection has its source in failing to perceive accurately the difference between true benevolence

and real selfishness. So far as the weight of this objection depends upon the supposed identity between the doctrine of benevolent utility and that which logically leads to selfishness, we think it is fully obviated by the definitions already given of self-love, selfishness, and benevolence, and of the difference between them. (See qs. 114–120.) So far is our doctrine from annihilating all morality, that we intend still further and in other ways to demonstrate that the doctrine (that holiness is relative good and that happiness is the only absolute good, and the only possible ultimate object of pursuit, especially of holy action) is the only ground on which morality is possible. We admire the confession of our reviewer that 'it is hard [*logically* to oppose this happiness scheme,' as he calls it. Is it not a little strange that this difficulty, — this impossibility of logically opposing this doctrine did not convince him that sound reason and enlightened consciences never revolt at it? Sound reason, correct logic, and an honest and adequately enlightened conscience never quarrel. They never *dis*agree at all. They always agree perfectly. It appears somewhat remarkable that so able a writer should not see that neither reason, conscience, nor logic will ever *oppose* that which is necessary even to the possibility of holiness, or *support* the contrary doctrine.

Obj. III. Another form of argument against the doctrine of benevolent utility is in these terms:

"Virtue . . . must be not a means but an end. As end it must give moral character to pleasures, instead of being characterized by them." — Pres. Quar. Review, 1855, p. 465.

1. As end, then, virtue must accomplish a still further end, viz. give character to pleasure. This is having an end ulterior to the *ultimate* end, — an end later than the *last* end, and is like extending the end of a line *beyond* the *end*. How such an end as the above terms are intended to describe can *be* an *end* at all, in distinction from being a *means* to a *farther end*, seems impossible to conceive.

2. Pleasures, strictly speaking, can have no moral character, as we have seen. (qs. 47, 49, 53.)

Pleasures are phenomena of the sensibilities, and are, there-

fore, in themselves in reality entirely distinct from moral character. Pleasure is one thing and holiness is entirely another thing, inasmuch as the production of a thing is not the thing itself. Holiness *produces* pleasure, or some degree of happiness. It is not only a means of happiness in fact, but it is *designed* to be a means of happiness. Nothing is or can be holiness, which is not designed to be means of happiness. Holiness is not only a means of happiness, but it is the *only*, — the *necessary* means of the *highest* happiness. It is not only the most excellent means of the most excellent happiness, but in a very important sense it is the indispensable means of all the happiness in the universe, that ever was or ever will be.

God, in his goodness, has brought into being all the power which created beings have for enjoyment, and all the material means of happiness which the created universe affords, and the holiness of God is the main, original source of his own happiness; and, for these reasons, the holiness of God is the primary, main source of *all* the happiness that ever was or ever will be, in time and in eternity, and throughout immensity.

That perfect holiness is, and is designed to be, and must be the means of highest happiness, is what we intend by saying holiness is a relative good. It is difficult to conceive how the affirmation, that "virtue must be [*not* a means, but an end," could be made by a philosopher, or even by a sensible man, and, at the same time, that he should not perceive its entire want of truth. If holiness is, as Edwards says it is, in itself *agreeable* and immediately *pleasant*, then it is in itself a source of happiness, and therefore a relative good. For these reasons, if virtue must *not* be a means, and a voluntary means, it must *not* be any thing.

Obj. IV. It has been said: "The idea that all virtue is benevolence does not logically imply that benevolence is right, merely because it is useful. It may be right, even if it should be hurtful." — Bib. Sac. 1853, p. 721.

1. *Mere* usefulness of any thing, besides the action of the will (we admit), is not right in a moral sense. And yet it is plainly true, that highest usefulness, being the object aimed at

in benevolence, is that which makes benevolence right, or constitutes its rightness. An *aim* is not right in itself apart from all consideration of the object aimed at. Highest happiness being rationally aimed at, is what makes the aim right.

2. Suppose, then, that benevolence were on the whole hurtful, as sin now is, to its subjects and its objects, so that the more benevolent a creature should be, the more miserable he would be, and the more misery he would communicate to other beings; suppose, also, that the benevolence of God should tend on the whole to his own misery, and on the whole to the misery of his creatures. Now, on this supposition, the more benevolence, the more misery, and of course the more benevolence there should be in the universe, the worse off, the more miserable, every being in it would be. In such a case, every wise being, who had any desire for happiness for himself or for others, would of course withhold, and he would be morally bound to withhold, all exercise of benevolence designed to promote the happiness of himself and of every other being.

Thus, the supposition that *benevolence may be right, even if it should be hurtful*, appears to begin and end in absurdity, and therefore it appears that the idea that all virtue is benevolence does logically imply that usefulness, or useful tendency, is one essential element in the rectitude of benevolence. The idea that all virtue is benevolence not only logically, but psychologically implies that utility is an essential element in the rightness of benevolence, because, separated from all supposable utility, benevolence would be an absolute psychological impossibility, involving the impossibility of acting without a motive. (Comp. qs. 14, 54, 181.)

Suppose there could be two kinds or classes of virtue, one of which should be useful, and the other in none of its relations useful, but in all its relations hurtful, — no *sane* man, not to say *wise* man, could hesitate which to practice, nor which he *ought* to practice, nor which he ought to avoid.

Obj. V. It has also been said, that "Holiness would be the greatest good conceivable, even if it did not [*tend* to secure happiness." — Bib. Sac. 1853, p. 738.

Ans. 1. What holiness would be if it *were* what it *is not*, and if its nature were so changed that it would *not tend* to secure that which now, by its own true and proper nature, it does and must secure, viz. the most excellent happiness and general well-being, is not now the question. The manifest reality is, that holiness, by being what it is, in the intrinsic tendency of its own immutable nature, secures the most excellent happiness conceivable. That holiness does this, is a conceded and an established, if not an undeniable, truth. And therefore, holiness is a means which does and must secure the most important ends, and therefore is not in itself an ultimate end, — is not final end at all. And on the fact of its being a means to this end of greatest happiness, its value depends.

2. Let it be supposed that neither God, angels, nor men could take any more delight or satisfaction in holiness forever, nor make it in any way the means of securing happiness. This supposition realized would also be its annihilation; therefore, so far from being the greatest good if it had *no* tendency to secure happiness in that case, it could not be practised, and it would be good for *nothing* if it could.

Obj. VI. The following statements have been made by different anti-utilitarians. (See q. 132.) "There is a good independent of the idea of happiness," "which has a worth of its own independent of happiness," 'some higher good than happiness, whether it can be defined or not.' "Virtue must be not a means, but an end." — Pres. Quar. Review, 1855. 'Benevolence is right, not because of its [*tendency*, but because of its nature.' "The nature of benevolence is one thing, and its tendency another. The nature of selfishness is one thing, and its tendency another." "Rectitude, apart from any benefits connected with it, is the highest good." 'Benevolence would be right, let it tend which way it will.' 'Virtues are not made right by their utility.' "When we say that right and wrong are inherent in the very nature of things, we simply assert that certain courses of conduct are in themselves, in their very nature and essence, wrong, certain others right; and that they are so, [*quite independent and irrespective of consequences that*

result from them." — Prof. J. Haven's Moral Philos. p. 49, and Bib. Sacra, 1856, p. 263, by the same writer.

"Uprightness is uprightness; it is right in itself, and may often be distinctly known as such, irrespective of all consequences. Neither is it a bargain for happiness; it is prompted by a supreme and direct regard to what is intrinsically good. At the same time, it is impossible for us not to desire happiness, for this desire, we have seen, is a part of our nature." "The first principles of morality [are] right in themselves, irrespective of all consequences." — Elements of Morality, by Hubbard Winslow, pp. 285, 311.

Reply. These statements by different writers, though not exactly consistent with each other, yet taken together as a whole, seem to have substantially the same basis, and appear to imply that certain moral acts are right independent and irrespective of all their consequences, whether designed or not, and of all their relations and tendencies to happiness, or misery, or any thing else; and for this reason, taken together, they imply that holiness is not a relative, but an absolute good, and of course that the idea of virtue is not a relative, but a simple, absolute idea, independent of all relations. Now, if such a thing could be, as a virtuous, benevolent, or right act not being a relative good, i. e. not a good to any being, and of course having no tendency nor other relation to happiness, there would be just as much well-being and happiness, just as much of good to all existing beings, without that virtue as with it. How that can be conceived of as good, or *a good, which is not good*, nor a good to any being in the universe, who can tell? When we are told how this can be conceived we shall have new light.

1. *Such* virtue as the above statements imply could not be benevolence, for the *ultimate object* of that is to promote happiness.

2. *It* could not be a *design* to promote any being's *happiness*, for that would have the two most important *relations* to happiness of designing and tending to produce that happiness.

3. *It* could neither be a design to please God nor any human being, for that would be to promote pleasure; but pleasure is some degree of happiness.

4. *It* could not be that "love which is the fulfilling of the law," for love is relative and must have an object loved, and no object *can* be loved which is not, or is not esteemed to be, in some degree, a source of happiness; and then it follows, also, that *it* could not be obedience to the law which requires love.

5. *It* could not be the love which Christ exercised in dying upon the cross for the salvation of a sinful world, who for the *joy* that was set before him endured the cross.

6. *It* could not be any voluntary exercise, because all voluntary exercise, all exercise of the will, implies choice, and *all choice is to be happy.* And all choice, design, purpose, intention (especially intention to fulfil moral obligation), has an object and is formed with the idea in the agent's mind of its being the means of attaining that object. And again; as 'desire of happiness comprehends all possible subjective motive which prompts us to all voluntary action, right or wrong,' happiness must be the ultimate object of all choice that can be conceived to be possible.

7. If "a right choice, excluding all happiness, is utterly inconceivable;" if, as Dr. Emmons says, "the ultimate end of all labor is enjoyment," then it follows most conclusively, that the statements under consideration, so far as they imply that virtue is not a means but an end, not a relative good, but in the strict and proper sense an ultimate end, independent and irrespective of its relations and tendencies to effects, consequences, and resulting happiness, they are *assumptions unfounded in truth;* and we are left to the conclusion, that holiness is a relative, but not an absolute, as distinguished from a relative, good, and in its essential nature must have relation and respect to tendencies, results, objects, ends, and consequences.

8. If all moral action must consist in choice, and if all choice is to be happy, and must have an object and must ultimately terminate in happiness, then, in our view, to suppose that a moral system can be constructed, or any idea of obligation formed, independent of, and having no respect to, any idea of, or tendency to, happiness, is as impossible as to find a material body not existing in space nor in time.

9. If, as Edwards held, benevolence is right because it *aims* at the general well-being, as most evidently it is, then it follows that holiness has a most important relation to happiness, viz. that of *aiming* to secure it. Can an aim to secure an object exist, with no thought of, and independent of, any idea of that object? Can an aim to secure an object exist, and have no relation to, and no tendency to produce, that object? Now if moral obligation requires me to *aim* at the general happiness, then I ought to *promote* it. All the philosophers in the world may safely and without arrogance be defied to show, that any man is under obligation to aim at the accomplishment of that which he knows not to be in his power, or to aim at any thing when he knows there is no tendency in his aiming to secure the object aimed at. He might as well be supposed to be under obligation to aim at hitting the moon with a shot from a Paixhan gun, or one of the fixed stars with the wad of a pop-gun. A supposed tendency of the aim to secure its object, is then essential to the obligation of putting it forth. Every one is bound to aim at the general welfare, because by aiming to, he can promote it. But if a person knew there was no tendency, in his aiming to promote that welfare, to advance it, then he would know that voluntarily to promote it would be out of his power, and then to him there could be no more obligation to aim at the general good, than to aim at the accomplishment of any other impossibility. For these reasons, voluntary, designed (not *mere*, *involuntary*, *unintended*) tendency to promote happiness, belongs to the nature of holiness, as an essential element in that nature. Therefore holiness is a relative but not an ultimate nor an absolute good, and cannot exist without regard to results — it cannot exist without regard to both tendencies and consequences.

10. The argument of some of these statements now under consideration, in objection to the doctrine that holiness is relative good, seems very much, if not mainly, based on the assumption that the *tendency* and *efficacy* of holiness do not belong to its *nature*, that the nature of holiness is one thing and its tendency another thing.

Now it is a blessed thing that men do sometimes see truth which at other times they overlook and deny.

If, as Dr. Emmons says, "It is the exclusive nature and tendency of holiness to produce contentment," then to produce contentment is both the nature and tendency of holiness, and then it would seem that its nature and tendency, to some extent at least, involve and imply each other, so that they cannot be entirely distinct from each other, so that they must be, at least in part, the same thing.

Again; if it can be truly said, as Dr. Emmons further says, that "The [*nature* of benevolence is to promote the highest good possible," and if "right acts always [*tend* to highest happiness," their nature and tendency must, in part at least, be the same thing.

Now, therefore, if the designed tendencies and efficacy of holiness to promote happiness do belong to the essential nature of holiness, by an absolute and indestructible necessity, in the unchangeable nature of things, as they very evidently do, as we have proved and as we expect still further to prove in the progress of this discussion, then this argument now under consideration is entirely without foundation, force, or value, against the doctrine that holiness is not an absolute, but *a relative good.* How any thing except happiness can be an absolute good rather than a relative good, how it can be a good, and not be a good to any being, i. e. without having the relation of means to the happiness of that being, — how any thing can be good to me and have no relation (not even the relation of means), to my happiness, it is impossible for me to conceive. For any thing besides my happiness, to be a good to me implies that it has the relation to my happiness of being the means of it. To me this seems a self-evident truth — a mere truism, — really nothing but an identical proposition; and therefore to maintain that holiness is an absolute good, and that the idea of right is a simple and absolute idea, — implying that a design can be right, independent of designed results and exclusive of the relation of fitness and tendency of the design to secure such results, is but to deny manifest truth — that which seems self-evident.

Pres. Edwards held, that "A general beauty [and by the beauty of right acts he meant, that quality of right acts which constitutes them right] is that by which a thing appears beautiful, when viewed most perfectly, comprehensively, and universally, with regard to all its [*tendencies* and its connections with every thing it stands related to." — Nat. of Vir. chap. 1. The *tendency* of holiness to produce happiness, then, belongs to its *nature*, and is one element in the foundation of moral obligation.

If happiness and the means of happiness comprehend all possible good conceivable, as we claim to have proved they do, (q. 66) then, virtues are constituted good and right, not by their *mere*, but by their intended tendency to, highest utility, — by their being designed to promote the greatest possible utility, — not by their being absolute, but by their being relative good, as having a tendency to secure good ulterior to themselves, and then, also, that which is neither happiness nor the means of happiness, is not in any sense good.

In further reply to quotations already made, we remark again; to say that virtue would be a good, whether it did or did not tend to happiness, seems very much like saying, that twice twenty would be forty, whether it were four times ten or not, and like saying that godliness would be profitable unto all things, whether it were or were not profitable at all.

To say that benevolence would be right and the greatest good irrespective of all its benefits, and even if it were hurtful, seems very much like saying, that virtue would be right whether it were virtue or not, — that a circle would be a circle though it were a square; — and like saying that the greatest blessing might after all be nothing but a curse, — that benevolence would be virtue, even if it were sin, and a very good thing, even if it were good for nothing.

Obj. VII. Some, if not all anti-utilitarians, hold that the idea expressed by the terms virtuous, right, holy, etc., is a simple and absolute idea, and, therefore, no *real* definition can be given of it, but only a *nominal* one; and, therefore, that virtue is not a relative but an absolute good. The dogma that moral obligation is not in any sense founded in utility, if it were true would

legitimately establish this position of theirs, so far as the possibility of giving any true, real, and proper definition of virtue as a quality, is concerned. But the trouble is, it would not only prove this, but it would prove much more than this, it would prove by far too much. It would not only establish the impossibility of defining virtue in the abstract, but it would prove the impossibility of defining or forming any just idea of virtue in the concrete, i. e. as it exists in virtuous acts; and what is still more, this would also prove, as we have before often established, the impossibility, according to this obnoxious theory, of *doing* a virtuous act.

If moral obligation were in no true, real, and proper sense founded in utility, if the supposition were true that virtue were in and of itself *ultimate* good, in opposition to the idea that it terminates only in the most valuable amount of happiness, then, to have an *idea* of virtue, to know what it is, would be an impossibility to the human mind, and to perform virtuous acts would be a still further impossibility.

The conception, that virtue is in itself a good apart from all its benefits, and all its tendencies to happiness, that it ultimately and finally terminates in itself, and not in the greatest happiness as its final object, resolves all holiness into the impossibility and absurdity of an infinite and endless series, or into a circle, with no place to begin and nowhere to end. (Comp. q. 133.) For example and illustration. Take the position that holiness is the highest ultimate good, and, therefore, that holiness must be the love of the highest good, which highest good is holiness, which is the love of holiness, which is the love of holiness, and so on forever, and thus holiness would have no object out of itself on which to terminate, and as it is an absurdity and an impossibility for it to terminate in itself, so, therefore, on this theory, it can begin nowhere, and end *absolutely nowhere.* This, we are compelled to conclude, is the landing-place of the last (the anti-utilitarian) half of the Bibliothecan theory of virtue, and, therefore, that the first (the utilitarian) half of this theory is a full and glorious overthrow of the last half. Of the first part of this theory we cannot speak too much in its praise. It

is truly utilitarian, and fully *Edwardean*. This is high praise. Still more, it is the true Bible doctrine. The claim that the last (the anti-utilitarian) part of this theory, is *Edwardean*, therefore, appears to be a mistake. That it is anti-utilitarian there can be no doubt, and in our firm conviction it is really *antinomian*, though not designed to be.

It may now appear that the *worthiness* theory of virtue subverts itself, by taking the above position, that holiness is highest and ultimate good, and does not terminate in the greatest happiness as the ultimate end, and thus, as shown above, resolves holiness into the absurdity and impossibility of an endless series of acts. So far, then, we are left to the conclusion that holiness is relative but not absolute good, that tendency to happiness is an essential element in the nature of benevolence, and, of course, in the nature of holiness as a quality of moral acts.

Another form of answering these objections. At the risk of being considered too repetitious, we proceed to present the following view of the topic in hand.

Various forms of argument, including the most important, against the doctrine of benevolent utility, seem to imply substantially the same thing, viz. that holiness is a final *end* but not a means, an ultimate and absolute end in itself, in distinction from its being a *relative* good, and in distinction from its having any relation to happiness, and, therefore, that it has no relation to happiness, and thus even involving the absurdity that *benevolence* has no relation to happiness.

1. If holiness consists in voluntary love, — in free choice, as has been proved, and as both reason and divine revelation unite in showing, then holiness implies some object of choice and of love, — some object chosen and loved, besides and beyond holiness itself. And if holiness have an object loved and chosen, then it cannot be an ultimate end, nor *in* and *of itself*, in strict sense, an *end* at all, and therefore it can be neither an ultimate nor an absolute *good*, but it must be a *relative* good; and further, its relation to its ultimate object must constitute its goodness, and as nothing else but happiness can be its ultimate object,

the relations of holiness to happiness must constitute all the goodness of holiness.

2. But should it be said, admitting that in point of time and in the order of nature and of the psychological facts as they actually take place, happiness is the real ultimate object and end of holy choice, still "holiness is an [*ultimate good* in respect of dignity and worth." In reply, we admit that holiness, in respect of dignity and moral worth, is the most exalted and *highest* moral good, if these terms can be admitted, when holiness is the *only moral* dignity and worth conceivable. But we humbly conceive this is not the true and proper meaning of the term *ultimate*. *Ultimate* we apprehend does not properly mean higher up, more noble, more dignified, more valuable, more excellent, or more worthy of moral approbation, nor any such thing. Ultimate means final, last in the order of time, of pursuit, and of acquisition. When we ascend to the top of a ladder, the ultimate round, the last one which we reach, is highest up; but ultimate does not mean highest up. When we descend, the ultimate round is lowest down.

3. Again: All love, both voluntary and involuntary love, implies some object. All voluntary love implies the voluntary taking or seeking some pleasure or delight in some object chosen, therefore the supposition realized and fully believed, that love has no such object, would render all love an impossibility and an inconceivable absurdity.

4. Take the two dogmas that holiness or "rectitude . . . is the highest good," and that "holiness is supreme love to the highest good," and then holiness is merely the love of holiness. Now, according to this view, holiness is end in and of itself, and therefore in and of itself most logically ends in the infinite absurdity and impossibility of an infinite series of acts, — in an endless circle. (See p. 166.) From all these opposing views we are *compelled* to take refuge in the doctrine of benevolent utility, and that holiness is relative but not absolute good.

Obj. VIII. *Different views of Dr. Emmons compared.* In accomplishing the object of this treatise it seems necessary to notice more particularly than we have as yet done, the follow-

ing views of Dr. Emmons on the topic now under consideration. As before quoted, he says: —

"The ultimate end of all labor is rest and enjoyment." Again, he says, "Godliness is as profitable as it is possible any thing should be. It will gain all the good in the universe. In the final issue it will make all the godly as happy as their finite and limited capacities will permit. This not only *may* but *must* be, according to the nature of godliness, and the express declaration of God himself." "It is the [*exclusive nature and tendency* of godliness to produce contentment." — Works, vol. iv. p. 463.

If these statements are true, as very clearly they are, then the object of holiness is to promote happiness, and its nature includes its tendency to promote its object, for the exclusive nature and tendency of godliness is to produce contentment, or happiness.

The plain and important truth here implied, this author (if we can truly and rightly understand his language) in other statements denies or forgets. In another place he says, "It is the moral nature of benevolence that renders it morally excellent; and it is the natural tendency of benevolence to promote happiness that renders it naturally excellent." "The nature of benevolence is one thing, and its tendency another." Just as though the intended nature of benevolence to promote happiness were not its moral nature, and just as though the *natural* tendency of a design to promote happiness did not belong to the real and moral nature of that design. Since benevolence is a design to promote happiness, 'that the natural tendency of benevolence is constituted by, and consists mainly in, its moral nature,' appears so plainly true, that it seems difficult to view it in any other light than that of a self-evident truth.

External acts produced by benevolent intentions, it is true, have some incidental tendencies, which do not depend on the moral character of those intentions. To feed the hungry and clothe the naked for a selfish purpose, may have some of the same tendencies to happiness which similar external acts, performed for a benevolent purpose, would have.

It is freely admitted, that those tendencies of *external* actions which are not designed, and do not depend upon the moral character of the intentions which caused them, do not belong to the moral nature of those intentions; and that those tendencies of *benevolent* acts which are not designed, and do not depend upon the moral character of those acts, do not belong to their moral nature. But this does not imply that the inseparable and designed tendencies of benevolence to promote happiness, do not belong to its moral nature.

That the *natural* excellence of benevolence is *moral* excellence, may be seen by reflecting that when moral acts have no moral excellence, they can have no natural excellence but such as may appertain to sin.

When benevolence shall be separated from its moral excellence, the natural excellence which will remain will hardly be worth defending, unless some excellence can be devised for it besides that which may pertain to sin.

It would seem irrational to admit, and like a sophistical use of language to say, that the natural tendency or excellence which belongs to the moral *nature* of benevolence is not its moral excellence, or that the *natural* and inseparable tendency of benevolence does not belong to the nature of virtue.

But let us attend to what the Doctor further has to say. "No case can be mentioned nor conceived, in which the moral nature of any free moral exercise of the mind can be determined by the effect produced. It is absurd, therefore, to suppose the moral excellence of virtue consists in its [*tendency* to produce happiness, or that the moral evil of sin consists in its [*tendency* to produce misery. They are both founded in the nature of things. The one is morally excellent in itself considered, and the other morally evil in itself considered, without any regard to the cause that produced them, or the effects that follow them." — Vol. iv. p. 228.

Reply. Knowledge merely of the *accidental* effects of an act of will, or of any supposed effects of such an act as might be known, without knowing what effects were intended, is not sufficient to determine the moral nature of a moral exercise. But

if the effect produced is, and is designed to be, the greatest addition to the general happiness in the agent's power, then the effect known to be so designed does determine the nature of the moral exercise. So essential is this truth, that there is no possible way in which the nature of a moral exercise can be determined without knowing what effects are designed in that moral intention. And this is so, because the moral character of an act essentially, entirely, and absolutely depends upon the ultimate object of that act, whether that object be the highest or a lower good.

Again; if that benevolence which fulfils the law does always produce, and if its intrinsic nature and tendency is known and designed to produce, the highest happiness which is in the agent's power to produce, then the nature of the exercise may be, and must be, determined by its effects, when those effects are sufficiently known.

It is, therefore, a very evident truth, that the nature of moral acts is determined by their designed effects, especially if those effects are known by the agent, according to the common course of things, to be produced by such acts; and it is evident that the moral character of acts can never be determined without any regard to those effects which constitute the objects of these acts.

Benevolence is holiness, because it aims to produce, and because by its aiming the intrinsic tendency of its nature is to produce, highest happiness, — it is in and of itself, — in itself considered, it is the voluntary, chosen production of highest happiness. Its only real and its only moral value consists in its known and chosen efficacy to produce happiness. In this sense, and in no other, is benevolence, in and of itself, or in itself considered, moral excellence. In itself, without regard to its designed effects, it is nothing, because without an object there cannot be a design of any kind, and therefore without an object designed there can be no benevolence.

To prove that the nature of benevolence and that of selfishness are different and distinct things from their tendencies, Dr. Emmons says: "The nature of benevolence and selfishness are

immutable, and cannot be altered by the Deity; but the [*tendency* of benevolence and that of selfishness can be altered." — Vol. iv. pp. 296, 297.

Reply. Their tendencies may be thwarted, but cannot be altered. We think those tendencies may be resisted, but not annihilated. Suppose that holiness and sin mutually oppose, resist, and thwart each other's tendencies, and to some extent prevent their designed effects. This does not show that their tendencies can be annihilated or changed. If, as we have repeatedly proved, the designed tendencies of holiness and sin belong respectively to their natures, their *tendencies* can no more be altered than their natures can be.

Our good Doctor also says: "There can be no [moral] goodness without good purposes and good designs." — Vol. iv. p. 277. Purposes and designs cannot be morally good, without being purposes and designs of promoting good effects, consisting ultimately in happiness, the only absolute and ultimate good. Moral goodness, then, must consist in purposes and designs of good effects and results. And "Moral goodness [when perfect] is essentially the same in all moral agents." — Ibid. p. 226. Again: "The perfect goodness of God must move him to make the intelligent universe as holy and as happy as possible." — p. 213. The goodness and benevolence of God, then, consists in his purpose and design to make the intelligent universe as holy and as happy as to him is possible. Now therefore, if God does not fail of his unchangeable purpose, and meet with unavoidable and unforeseen disappointment (and that God does *thus* fail and meet with *such* disappointment, neither Dr. Emmons nor any other man of sense would admit), then the *results* to be produced are the highest holiness and happiness of the intelligent universe which to God are possible; and the goodness of God consists in having these results for its object.

Here, then, is a case in which the moral nature of a free moral exercise is determined by the effect produced. If the effect produced had been the greatest amount of misery possible to the Deity, this would have determined the purpose by which the effect was produced to be of another character.

But as to the cause of moral acts, Dr. Emmons maintained, that "God creates within us free moral exercises, and these both sinful and holy." — Vol. i. p. 147, Park's Lecture on Emmons. Maintaining this, it is not to be wondered at, that the Doctor should claim that, in deciding the character of moral acts, we must not have any respect either to their cause, or to their effects, since he held both that a holy cause produces sinful effects, viz. sins, and that sin is the occasion necessary to the best effects, — means of the greatest good.

SECTION II.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE KANTIAL ANTI-UTILITARIAN THEORY AS HELD BY M. VICTOR COUSIN, OR THE COUSINISTIC THEORY.

The third theory before alluded to, and to which we now invite the reader's attention, is that held by M. Victor Cousin, who is reputed to be one of the most eminent French philosophers of the present age. One reason why a refutation of the error contained in this theory is demanded, is, that it is made to appear so plausible and inviting, by the skilful, eloquent, and elegant language by which it is set forth and recommended; and another is, that there is *so much* truth contained in it.

The sum of the doctrine is this, — that moral quality is found alone in acts of the will, — in free, voluntary choice, — that right is a simple and necessary idea of the reason, — that utility is a contingent idea of the understanding, and derived from experience, and is not an element in the idea of right, — that the tendencies of holiness do not belong to its nature, — that virtue is a good in itself, without *any regard* to any of its tendencies, or consequences whatever, and even admitting that it results in ruin, as according to this philosophy it sometimes does, — that utility in none of its senses is *essential* to virtue.

We quote largely from the language of our author, that it may be distinctly seen what his theory is, and what his arguments are in support of it. These quotations are from the fifth chapter of Henry's translation of Elements of Psychology by

Victor Cousin, included in a criticism upon Locke on the Human Understanding. These quotations we have divided into sections and numbered them, so that we could refer to them by their numbers in remarks upon them.

1. "It is an undeniable fact, that when we have done right or wrong, when we have obeyed the laws of justice [or right], or have broken it, we judge that we merit either reward or punishment. It is moreover a fact that we do indeed receive reward or punishment; (1.) in the approbation of conscience or in the bitterness of remorse; (2.) in the esteem of our fellow men, who, themselves moral beings, judge also of good and bad as we do, and like us judge that right and wrong merit reward and punishment; . . . (3.) and finally, if we raise our thoughts beyond this world, if we conceive of God as we ought, not only as the author of the physical world, but as the Father of the moral world, as the very substance of good and of the moral law, we cannot but conceive that God ought also to hold ready rewards and punishments, for those who have fulfilled or broken the law."

2. "But suppose there is neither [moral] good nor evil, [*neither justice nor injustice in itself* (see p. 371, etc.); [1] suppose

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[1] "Justice or injustice in itself," any virtue or vice actually performed and which *in itself* has no regard to, nor design of, any result, and which of course can have no regard to happiness or misery, is an absurdity, an impossibility, an inconceivability, and will remain so until there can be a voluntary and virtuous or vicious action without an object and without any desire to obtain that object.

For illustration, take an example before introduced. Suppose I owe you a dollar. Justice obligates the payment. Suppose, now, I learn from an authentic source, worthy fully to be relied upon, that you, knowing the debt have no need in any sense, and no desire nor wish for the dollar, that will be disappointed by non-payment, and that not to pay you, will bring after it no injury to any one. Now as soon as in knowing all this, I know that no good will be done by paying and no hurt will be done by not paying, neither justice nor moral law any longer demands the payment.

But now, on the other hand, suppose by my choosing not to pay the dollar, I withhold from a starving man the only means which he has of saving his life, and that by doing this I knowingly and wilfully starve the poor man to death. The world is ready to cry out against the injustice of such

there is no law. There can, then be no such thing as merit or demerit in having broken or obeyed it; there is no place for reward or punishment. There is no ground for the peace of conscience, nor for the pains of remorse. There is no ground for the approbation or the disapprobation of our fellow men, for their esteem or their contempt. There is no ground for punishments inflicted by society in this life, nor in the other, for those appointed by the Supreme Legislator. The idea of reward and punishment rests, then, upon that of merit or demerit, which rests upon that of law. . . . Now, then, the most superficial observation, provided it be impartial, easily demonstrates that in the human mind, in its present actual development, there is the idea of right and of wrong, altogether distinct from each other. It is a fact, that in presence of certain actions, reason qualifies them as good or bad, just or unjust."

Justice or injustice in itself, aside from all objects to be gained or hindered by it, is nothing at all, a mere nonentity. Cousin himself affirms "morality has to do with the intentions." If so, justice can be executed only by intention. An intention which has no object out of itself is just exactly nothing, neither more nor less. All intentions have regard to some ultimate object out of and beyond themselves.

Justice in itself is nothing in any sense, except that justice in itself when executed is designed to secure as far as possible the general *well-being*, and those interests and that happiness to which individuals and communities have a right, and to secure

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cruelty. And why? Not because there is any justice or injustice in the act *in itself*, that is, in simply paying or not paying the dollar, aside from all known and designed tendencies and consequences of the act; but because of the tendencies and consequences known and designed in and by the act of payment or non-payment. Here it is evident that the known utility of the act is what renders it obligatory, and its designed utility is what renders it worthy of approbation. Designed utility of a voluntary act is not *mere* utility, *undesigned*, like that of food and clothing, or like the irrational utility of an ox or a horse. Doing good to all as we have opportunity both to ourselves and others, voluntary utility, promoting happiness for all, is precisely what the law of love requires.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. This law cannot be obeyed, without regarding both our own and our neighbor's interests and happiness.

those interests of God's kingdom to which he has a right. All that the argument which is necessary to support the truth requires here, is that moral obligation — righteous law — is an unoriginated, eternal reality.

". . . The distinctions between right and wrong may be incorrectly applied, may vary in regard to particular objects, and may become clearer and more correct in time, without ceasing to be with all men the same thing at the bottom. It is an universal conception of reason, and hence is found in all languages, those products and faithful images of the mind. Not only is this distinction universal, but it is a necessary conception. In vain does the reason, after having once received, attempt to deny it or call in question its truth. It cannot. One cannot at will regard the same action as just and unjust. These two ideas baffle every attempt to commute them, the one for the other. Their [specific] objects may change, but never their natures [nor their ultimate object]. Still further: reason cannot conceive the distinction between right and wrong, just and unjust, without instantly conceiving that the one ought to be done, and the other ought not to be done. The conception of right and wrong instantly gives that of duty, of law; and as the one is universal and necessary, the other is equally so. Now a law necessary for the reason in respect to action, is for a [*rational free agent*, a simple obligation, but it is an absolute obligation. Duty obliges us, though without forcing us; but at the same time if we can violate it we cannot deny it. Accordingly, even when the feebleness of the liberty and the ascendency of passion make the action false to the law, yet the reason, independent, asserts the violated law as [in right] an inviolable law, and imposes it still with supreme authority upon the wayward conduct as its imprescriptible [indestructible] rule. The sentiment of the reason and of moral obligation, which reason reveals and imposes, is consciousness in its highest degree and office; it is moral consciousness, or conscience properly so called."

With the exception of the phrase, "justice nor injustice in itself," already noticed, this is all right and good and excellent so far. But now mark what follows.

3. "Observe distinctly, however, with what obligation has to do. It refers to [voluntary] right doing. It bears upon no other point, but here it is absolute. It is, then, independent of every foreign consideration; [now take care] it has nothing to do with the facilities or difficulties which its fulfilment may encounter, nor with the consequences it may entail, with pleasure or pain, that is, with happiness or misery, that is, again, with any motive of utility whatever.[1] For pleasure and pain, happiness and misery, are nothing but objects of the sensibility; while moral good and moral obligation are conceptions of the reason. Utility is but an accident, which may or may not be; duty is a principle.[2]

4. "Now is not right doing always useful to the agent and to others? That is another question, to answer which we no

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[2] Obligation is fulfilled only by the voluntary action which that obligation requires, and that action must have the end or object which the obligation requires it should have.

Obligation, then, does and must directly "refer" to, and most directly "bear upon," the consequences and results, which right action must be designed to secure, in order to fulfil what the obligation requires. That obligation which requires *that* voluntary action which is to have nothing to do with, and is to be entirely independent of, all "consequences it may entail, of happiness or misery, pleasure or pain," — and which is to have no *motive* of, and no relation to, *utility*, I am sure is not a conception of the reason, and can have no existence either in time or space or reason. Such obligation can be neither a necessary nor a contingent idea. It is neither rational nor empirical.

All voluntary love implies some object loved, all choice an object chosen to be secured, — all purpose and aim implies an end purposed and aimed at. Now if all virtue consists in voluntary love, choice, purpose, aim, or intention, then aside from its relation to its object and ultimate end, that is, aside from its designed object, consequences, and results, *in itself* it is nothing, and for this reason is not virtue. Therefore, again, since happiness is the only possible final end, and desire of happiness the only possible subjective motive of all voluntary action, that *idea* of virtue which is entirely independent of utility, and has nothing to do with promoting happiness or preventing misery, — that virtue which has nothing to do with its essential motive and only object, is a mere transcendental fiction of a bewildered brain, and has no corresponding reality in nature. *Bewildered* on this subject *surely*.

longer appeal to reason, but to experience.[3] Even if it does, and if the useful be always inseparable from the good, yet the good and the useful are none the less distinct in themselves; and it is not on the ground of utility that virtue becomes obligatory, and that it obtains universal veneration and admiration. It is admired, and that proves that it is not taken [*solely* as useful. Admiration [i. e. moral approbation] is a phenomenon which it is impossible to explain altogether by [*mere irrational and unintended*] utility.

5. "If the good were nothing but the useful, the admiration which virtue excites would always be on account of its utility. But such is not the fact. Human nature is wrong, perhaps, in being so formed; but its admiration is not always the expression of interest. The most useful virtuous acts can never be so much so as many natural phenomena, which everywhere diffuse and maintain life. There is not an act of virtue, how salutary soever it be, which can be compared in this respect with the beneficent influence of the sun. And who ever admires the sun? Who ever experiences for it the sentiment of moral admiration and respect which the most unproductive act of virtue inspires? It is because the sun is

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[3] Not exactly another question. We hold this to be the true question, viz. Is designed utility to ourselves and others both the object and result of virtue? Suppose, now, we get the true answer to the real point of our inquiry, of what importance is it from what source we obtain it, whether from reason or experience, or from both? We hold that sound reason, unperverted common sense, the nature, powers, and relations of the human mind, all unite with experience in teaching that such an actual conception of virtue as should either separate or distinguish it from all designed and all supposable tendencies to produce happiness both for ourselves and others (if such *conception* were possible), would render *virtue* an actual impossibility, and in every sense an actually worthless thing, if it were possible.

If virtue is and must be designed utility, if the actual utility of virtue in some of its relations is essential even to the possibility of virtuous action, the mind which can believe that *virtue* and rational, designed highest possible *utility* or usefulness are *in themselves entirely distinct ideas*, must have soared into a transcendental region which our poor faculties have never been able to reach.

[*nothing but* useful; while the virtuous act, whether useful or not, is the [*fulfilment of a law* to which the agent, whom we denominate virtuous, and whom we admire, is [*voluntarily conformed.*" [4]

[4] JUST SO, *precisely*, excepting the phrase "*whether useful or not.*" It is becausc the sun is *nothing but* useful, that the sentiment of moral approbation for it can never in the reason be perceived, nor in the sensibility be felt, — because the utility of the sun is *mere undesigned* utility, because its utility is tlie necessary production of a natural law, and not the production of voluntary obedience to a moral law; while the approbation which we give to a virtuous act, and through the act to the agent for the act, is given because the utility of that act is just what the law requires, and is therefore the fulfilment of moral obligation, or moral law, — because this is something *more* than *mere* utility, viz. designed utility, designed in obedience to law, and in fulfilment of moral obligation.

In the preceding fourth and fifth sections, our reasoner raises a false issue, wanders from the true point of inquiry, and goes off on another track.

The question is not, whether mere unintended, irrational, involuntary, or necessitated utility, such as is predicable of created objects, of brute animals or inanimate things; nor whether usefulness to the agent is the *sole* ground on which virtue becomes obligatory; but the truc question is, Is *utility*, in some true and proper sense, predicable of moral action, so as to constitute it an essential element in the nature of virtue? does the law of right require voluntary usefulness, intentional promotion of happiness for ourselves and others, so that in reality highest general happiness is and must be the ultimate objective end or object of duty, and the desire of that personal happiness which the general happiness would gratify must be the primary subjective motive for performing it?

This question we answer in the affirmative, for these reasons: 1. Happiness is, as we have proved, the ultimate subjective object of all voluntary, intelligent, moral action, and therefore of all virtuous action. 2. The desire of happiness is the subjective motive of all moral action, and therefore of all virtuous action. 3. That conception of virtue which denies these propositions, and regards virtuous action as destitute of all utility, would (as we have so often shown), if true, make virtue an impossibility, and in every sense a perfectly worthless, and therefore a foolish thing, if it were possible. 4. Whatever is essential to the possibility of virtuous action, is also essential to the foundation of moral obligation; therefore, utility, or usefulness, is an essential, though not the *sole*, element in the foundation of virtue. We agree with our author, that the doctrine 'that *mere* irrational, unintended utility of any thing is virtue,' ought to be forever repudiated.

6. "We may derive advantage from an action without admiring it, as we may admire an action without deriving advantage from it. [Not without that advantage which the pleasure of admiring it affords.] The foundation of admiration, then, is not the utility which the admired object procures to others; still less is it the utility of the action to him who performs it.[5] The virtuous action would otherwise be nothing but a lucky calculation (see q. 146); we might congratulate the author, but not the least in the world should we be tempted to admire him. Mankind demands of its heroes some other merit than that of a sagacious merchant; and far from the utility of the agent and his personal interest being the ground or the measure of the admiration, it is fact, that other things being equal, the phenomenon of admiration diminishes or increases in proportion to the sacrifices which the virtuous action cost. But if you wish for proof that virtue is not founded upon the personal interest of him who practices it, take the example I have given on another occasion, of a generous man whose virtue proves his ruin, instead of being an advantage to him.[6] And, to prevent all idea

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[5] Directly the reverse of this statement, as it respects others, in our view, is the truth, except that utility is not the *sole* foundation of admiration, nor the sole element in the idea of virtue, nor the sole element in the foundation of *obligation*. If some degree of the utility of virtue to the agent, also, must be seen before virtue to him can be a possibility, as we have so often proved, then this point is settled. Doing good to others is not only what the law of love requires, but it is what all men approve.

[6] All the sacrifices which virtue requires, or admits of, consist only in giving up a less for a greater good. It is true, where virtue costs great self-denial, our admiration is increased. But virtue never ruins its true votaries. It never requires them to ruin themselves. "The man who sacrifices his life on the scaffold may make a very prudent calculation for his best interest."—Dr. Henry, our author's translator. He who dies a martyr in the cause of virtue, shall secure his eternal well-being. Martyrs for the sake of Jesus Christ have gone to the stake with a joy triumphant over death.

No such case as that which our author supposes ever did, ever will, or ever can, occur. *Virtue never ruins.* The hero who, actuated by a holy benevolence, deliberately and voluntarily consigns himself to inevitable death, when indispensably necessary as the only possible means to save his

of calculation, suppose a man who sacrifices his life for the truth, who dies upon the scaffold young and fresh in life, for the cause of justice.

7. "Here, then, is no future to be looked at, of course no chance of ulterior advantage; and of course no calculation, no possible self-interest. This man, if virtue is nothing but utility, is a fool, and mankind who admire him are delirious. This delirium is nevertheless a fact, an undeniable fact. It demonstrates, then, unanswerably, that in the human mind, in its actual state, the idea of right and wrong, of virtue and vice, is one thing, and the idea of utility, of pleasure and pain, of happiness and misery, is another thing."[7] Truly, just as the idea of a complex part is one thing, and the idea of the various parts composing a complex whole is another thing.

The reasoning of our author fully proves that virtue is something *more* than usefulness, or prudence, or sagacious calculation of public or private interests. And that *something more* is

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country from ruin, does so with a joy which is infinitely to be preferred to that which he could have, by saving his life, at the expense of his country's ruin. Heroes may ruin themselves. But common sense requires more of those whom it regards as holy men, than that they should be heroes. Alexander, Hannibal, Cæsar, and Napoleon Bonaparte were heroes. But I do not know that the world has any evidence that one of them was a holy man. Holiness is a better security of a holy man's dearest interests than heroism. And yet holiness has made the noblest heroes the world ever saw.

[7] The doctrine of benevolent utility is not that virtue is *nothing* but utility. The virtuous man who dies in the cause of truth and justice, is not the *fool who ruins himself*, with no gain nor advantage to himself here nor hereafter. The sarcastically pretended *delirium* of mankind is never tested, nor proved to be such an undeniable fact by such a case as is here supposed.

The precise point, then, so unanswerably demonstrated here, is in fact not demonstrated at all.

The foregoing reasoning does indeed demonstrate that the idea of virtue is one thing, and that the idea of *mere*, undesigned utility, such as may be predicated of any thing besides virtuous action, is quite a different thing, and that *utility* is not the *whole* of virtue. But it does not demonstrate that obligation has nothing to do with the consequences it may entail, nor with happiness or misery, nor with any motive of utility.

this, that virtue is the rational, intended promotion of those interests and ends which the wisest sagacity of the agent, by the best use which he can make of the reason and all the means which God has given him, can decide to be the greatest and best, so far as it is possible for him to promote them.

Again; the foregoing argumentation of our author, although it proves that the idea of the law of right is an idea of the reason, does *not* prove that the idea of the rule of utility (viz. that whatever promotes happiness is useful) is not an idea of the reason, as much and in the same sense as the idea of the moral law is an idea of the reason. It does not prove that one of these ideas is any more a necessary or a universal idea than the other is, or that either is any more a contingent idea than the other is, or that either of these ideas is derived from experience any more than the other is; nor does it prove that greatest happiness is not the ultimate object of duty, nor that the desire of happiness does not include the only possible subjective motive to duty, and therefore, no argument from any of these sources is of any avail to prove that utility is not an essential element of virtue, and an essential element in the foundation of moral obligation.

In confirmation of our last remarks we make the following quotation from a foot-note by the translator: —

"In his 'Programm of a Course of Philosophy,' Cousin classes the moral principles under two general divisions, *contingent* and *necessary* principles; the former of which he observes are not in fact principles properly speaking, but sentiments or emotions, general indeed, but contingent and variable. They are referable to two general instincts — *expansion* and *concentration*." Thus far the translator; now Cousin:

"*Contingent Moral Principles.*

"The general principles which refer to the instinct of *expansion*, constitute what may be called the morality of sentiment, variable and not obligatory. — The morality of pity, of sympathy, of benevolence, considered merely as sentiment or emotion.

"The general principles which refer to the instinct of *concen-*

tration, or self-love, constitute the morality of self-interest, variable and not obligatory.

"Fundamental principle of the morality of self-interest in regard to an action to be performed; look only at the consequences relative to personal happiness.

"The most important general principles which form the morality of self-interest: —

"1. Do right, abstain from wrong, from hope or fear of the rewards or penalties of civil society; —

"2. Do right, abstain from wrong, from hope or fear of divine rewards or punishments; —

"3. Do right, abstain from wrong, from fear of blame from others, and even of remorse, and in order to gain the pleasure of a good conscience and internal happiness. All these contingent principles relate to the sensibility, and have respect only to the individual, to self."

"*Necessary Principles.*

"There is within us a moral principle which is necessary and universal, which embraces all times and all places, the possible as well as the real, — the principle of right and wrong. This principle distinguishes and qualifies actions. Moral reason. Special characteristic of this principle: Obligation. — The moral law.

"Enunciation of the moral law: Do right for the sake of right; or rather, will the right for the sake of the right. Morality has to do with the intentions." This theory and the like of it are properly termed Rightarian.

"Not only do we unceasingly aspire after happiness, as sensitive beings, but when we have done right, we judge as intelligent and moral beings, that we are worthy of happiness. — This is the necessary principle of merit and demerit — the origin and foundation of all our ideas of reward and punishment, — a principle, perpetually confounded with the desire of happiness, or with the moral law."—Fragmens Philosophiques, pp. 248–251.

From the tenor of this whole discussion, and especially from these statements quoted from the Fragmens, and from those contained in section 1, of the above quotations, it appears to be

Cousin's object to prove, as a fundamental principle, that to act from the desire of happiness and dread of misery is not, and cannot be virtuous action. The inference is inevitable, that if it be not virtuous, it must be sinful thus to act.

There is besides this egregious error, a very important truth, which appears *also* to be implied in these statements, viz., that to act from hope of reward, or from fear of punishment, is only in the full and comprehensive sense, to act from desire of happiness and fear of misery. It is difficult to conceive why the moral governor of the universe should place us under law, supported and enforced by the legal sanctions of rewards and penalties, if he did not intend we should be influenced by the desire of one, and dread of the other,—desire to avoid penalty.

Now, we claim to have proved that these motives of desire and dread, comprehend all possible subjective motives to the human mind for voluntary action.

That we are right in this position, we think is implied in Cousin's statement, that "we unceasingly desire happiness."

If this be so, then the theory of this prince of French philosophers is fundamentally erroneous, and is not only inconsistent with the true doctrine, but is at variance with his own teaching.

Again; according to these statements, now under consideration, followed to their legitimate results, all acting from a desire of happiness and dread of misery, all regard to, and all seeking of, one's own happiness, is finally reducible to *that* self-love, which looks *only* to personal happiness — to self-interest, and has respect *only* to the individual, — to self, and therefore, by inferential necessity, it must be that selfishness which is the source and sum of all sin, and therefore constitutes the only moral action possible to man. (See q. 114–120.)

This teaching of Cousin thus appears to confound all distinction between benevolence and selfishness, holiness and sin, or rather according to its legitimate results, holiness would appear to be an entire impossibility, because it is impossible to act without the prompting influence of a desire for happiness.

One of the particular statements, which has its influence in

leading us to these results, is: "Do right for the sake of right."

This phrase, *for the sake of right*, is equivocal, and may be understood in either of the two senses. One of these senses accords with truth; the other does not. (See Note E, Sec. 1, Obj. I. p. 371.)

1. For the sake of right, may mean for the sake of the pleasure found in doing right, and for the sake of all the good which results from doing right, because doing right is that in itself which has an efficacious influence and tendency to secure, and does actually secure the best possible results. This evidently is not Cousin's meaning, although it is that which accords with truth.

2. "Do right for the sake of right." For the sake of that which right, independent of all its relations to happiness, is in itself, and not for the sake of any pleasure found in doing it, nor for the sake of any happy result, *not for any motive of utility*, nor for any *ulterior* object whatever. (See § 3 of the above quotations, p. 395.) This sense, Cousin's language and arguments unite in implying, and therefore compel us to understand. To do right for the sake of right, in this sense, is an absurd impossibility, because all virtuous choice must have happiness both for its ultimate objective and subjective object, and the desire of happiness for its subjective motive.

The inherent absurdity of the theory we are opposing, lies in the impossibility of acting without a subjective motive to prompt to action, and without any ultimate object on which that action can terminate, involving the necessity of an infinite series of actions performed as in a circle, with nowhere to begin, and nowhere to end, and of course never to reach any result.

The phrase, *right is a good in itself*, is also equivocal, and may be understood in either of two senses corresponding to those above expressed, in which the phrase *for the sake of right* may be understood.

1. It may be intended to mean that right is a good independent of all its relations to happiness, and without having any thing to do with happiness or misery, or any motive of utility.

And this evidently is the doctrine held forth by Cousin. In this sense, we have morally demonstrated that right in the concrete is an impossibility.

2. This phrase may be understood to mean that right is a good in itself, because it is *in itself* promotive of the highest happiness, and of all its possible good results, by being what it is in itself, and for no other reason than its being what it is. In this sense, right-doing is a good in itself, but in the other sense it cannot be a good in itself. To suppose it, involves inextricable absurdities.

Happiness is an ultimate end in and of itself (as nothing else, not even holiness, is or can be), aside and entirely separated from any and all of its relations to any thing and every thing else. Happiness is not choice, and may therefore itself be an ultimate end. But all holiness, all right in the concrete, consists in choice, and cannot therefore be the ultimate object of itself, but it must have an end which is not in itself, but an end out of, ulterior to, and beyond itself, which finally must be happiness.

N. B. To use a phrase in a sense which expresses error, when that phrase may be naturally understood in either of two senses, one of which is true and the other false, is perplexing sophistry, especially when the difference between the sense which expresses truth is not readily distinguished from that which implies error. Doing this gives great plausibility to our author's reasoning on this subject, in various parts of his works. Especially does this appear in his argument which we are about to notice.

Having shown what he regards the difference to be, between the idea of right and wrong and the idea of happiness, Cousin proceeds to show their relation. The relation of virtue to happiness he represents to be this, that the virtuous man is worthy to be happy, and that in respect to him happiness is not an arbitrary idea, but a right. He says, "At the same time when the guilty man is rendered wretched as the effect of his vices, do we not judge that he deserves it? In a word, do we not judge in general that it would be unjust for vice to be

happy and virtue miserable? In vain does reason endeavor to conceive vice as worthy of happiness; it cannot succeed in the attempt. It cannot help demanding an intimate harmony between happiness and virtue." "The idea of merit and demerit is for the reason inseparable from that of the moral law fulfilled or violated. Hence the idea of reward and punishment as universal and necessary."

"Without any doubt it is useful to society to punish effectually the individual who attacks the foundation of social order. This consideration of utility is real; it is weighty; but I say that it is not the first, that it is only accessory, and that the immediate basis of all penalty is the idea of the essential merit and demerit of actions, the general idea of order, which imperiously demands that the merit and demerit of actions, which is a law of reason and of order, should be realized."

"Then comes up the idea of utility, the immediate utility of repressing evil, and the indirect utility of preventing it, by example, that is by fear. But this consideration has need of a basis superior to itself, in order to render it legitimate. Suppose in fact that there is nothing [morally] good or evil in itself, and consequently neither essential merit nor demerit, and consequently, again, no absolute right of blaming or punishing; by what right, then, I ask, do you blame or disgrace a man, or make him ascend the scaffold, or put him in irons for life, for the advantage of others, when the action is neither good nor bad in itself, and merits in itself neither blame nor punishment? Suppose that it is not absolutely right, just in itself, to blame this man or to punish him, and the legitimacy and propriety of infamy and of glory; and of every species of reward and punishment are at an end. Still further, I maintain if punishment has no other ground than utility, then even its utility is destroyed; for in order that a punishment may be useful, it" must be just. "Thus the utility of punishment is itself grounded in its justice, instead of its justice being grounded in its utility. Punishment is the sanction of the law, and not its foundation." "The idea of right and wrong is grounded only on itself, on reason which reveals it."

This reasoning is evidently designed to confirm the conclusion which our author in his own judgment had previously reached, viz. that virtue is not founded at all in utility, and also to prove that the justice of rewards and penalties is not founded at all on their utility, but on merit and demerit.

This idea of right and wrong is alluded to in various parts of Cousin's works, and more fully discussed in that on the True, the Beautiful, and the Good, but we believe the sum and substance of his arguments in favor of his views on the nature of virtue are contained in the above extracts.

His reasoning in these last quotations will probably appear very clear and very profound and conclusive to many minds, and to some able, discriminating, and strong minds, conclusive in proof of the main point aimed at.

To our mind this reasoning appears very clear and very conclusive too, but conclusive in proof, not of the main point designed, viz. that utility is not a primary and an essential element in the foundation of moral obligation, moral law, and in the nature of all right and justice which in sound reason is conceivable, but conclusive in proof that utility is not *the only* element in the foundation of obligation, and that rewards and penalties, to be just, must be rendered in consequence of righteous law having been, in voluntary moral action, fulfilled or violated by rational, moral agents.

Let us now inquire what the reason is why this argument fails to prove the main point in question. In our view, the reason why this argument fails in this respect, is that the opinion which is taken as demonstrated and as the foundation or premise of the argument, instead of being demonstrated is falsely assumed, and is not, therefore, in reality founded in truth.

The foundation of this argument is, that utility is not an element in the nature of virtue nor in the foundation of the law of duty. The validity of a conclusion reached by a logical argument, depends on the truth of the premises taken as the foundation of that argument. Now, as we claim to have proved that utility is an element in the nature of holiness,

and in the foundation of all obligation and law, we claim, also, that this argument is founded in error, and its conclusion is therefore both entirely without proof and utterly erroneous.

Again; let us suppose that punishment, in justice, is deserved, so that, if inflicted, the transgressor will have no injustice done him; suppose, also, that he is thoroughly penitent and does not now need reformation, and that the public good does not require his punishment; in other words, so far as utility is concerned, all necessity for inflicting punishment is in some way removed (e. g. by an adequate atonement), so that no crime and no misery shall be prevented, and no virtue and no happiness shall be secured or promoted by punishment. In such a case, the universal reason of heaven and earth would cry out against the wickedness of that power which should go forth to the execution of punishment. And the reason of this outcry would be, that there is no good, but rather hurt, done by this punishment, and no happiness, but rather misery, promoted by it, or, which is the same reason, because there is no *utility* of any kind in such punishment, and therefore it would be unjust to the whole community; although the punishment should be no more than what *had been*, in relation to a legal economy, the just desert of the punished.

The height of sophistry is to make an unsound and spurious argument appear to be legitimate, thorough, deep, and sound. The argument under consideration has much the appearance of being all this. In our view, its fallacy lies not only in taking false premises, but in using phrases which in some obvious and important sense are true, while in the sense intended they are not true; e. g. *Suppose there is nothing good or evil in itself. Absolutely right, just in itself. The idea of right and wrong is grounded only on itself, on reason which reveals it.* (See p. 371, etc.)

That there is nothing morally good or evil, just or unjust, *in itself*, in the sense which Cousin evidently intends, and by the necessities of his argument must intend, we have already repeatedly shown, while in an obvious and very important sense, there is a good and right and just in itself. And that sense is,

that right is a good in itself, because it is in itself that which designedly promotes the greatest happiness.

For the same reason, in the sense so often refuted and repudiated, there can be *in itself* no moral good nor evil, right nor wrong, just nor unjust. Again; the idea of right and wrong cannot in reason be founded on itself, because all right action must have both a subjective and an objective motive, both of which, in all possible forms and degrees in which they can exist, ultimately involve utility. And for these reasons, utility must be *one*, though *not the only* element in the foundation of moral obligation and moral law and in the nature of virtue.

One way in which an argument may appear very strong at the first view is, by keeping the true issue out of sight, by misrepresenting, whether by design or not, the opposing opinion or theory. This is done in the present case, by arguing as though the doctrine of utility, as the foundation of virtue, implies that utility is the *only* element in the nature of virtue, and in the foundation of moral obligation; whereas the true doctrine is, that intelligent, voluntary power to obey a moral law which requires the promotion of the greatest possible amount of general happiness, is essential to the foundation of all obligation. And that this power, without which right action is impossible, must be exerted for this end in all right action.

Here we conclude our disposition of the Cousinistic theory, so far as it is in opposition to that which we regard as the true one.

SECTION III.

[Referred to, p. 138.]

AN EXAMINATION OF THE VIEWS OF PROF. HICKOK AND HIS REVIEWERS ON THE WORTHINESS THEORY OF VIRTUE, AS THESE VIEWS ARE EXPRESSED IN THE MORAL SCIENCE, IN THE PRES. QUAR. REV., DEC., 1855, AND IN THE BIBLIOTHECA, JAN., 1856, AND JULY, 1859.

We now return, as before proposed, to the more particular consideration of the *worthiness* theory of virtue, as opposed to

the doctrine of benevolent rectitude, as this doctrine implies that happiness is the ultimate object of holy action, and that tendency to happiness is an essential element of virtue, both in the abstract and in the concrete.

In a work on Moral Science by Laurens P. Hickok, D. D., Vice-Pres. of Union College, the following statement occurs: "When [the will] yields to the animal impulse, so as to make the gratification of the appetite, or highest happiness, its ultimate end, and thus puts the whole executive agency under the dominion of sense, it is an enslaved will. When this capacity of will goes out towards either alternative of happiness or worthiness as ultimate end, it is choice. When this choice of ultimate end is in reference to . . . happiness or worthiness, Mammon or God, it is moral disposition giving permanent character." — pp. 58, 59.

According to Dr. Hickok, then, 'highest happiness' can be the ultimate end only of sinful choice, and, according to his use, is synonymous with Mammon. Highest happiness cannot be the ultimate end of holy choice, and therefore some other thing distinct from happiness must be the ultimate end of all holy action. This other thing he calls *the spirit's worthiness.* Now if (as we think we have most conclusively shown), happiness is, and inevitably must be, the ultimate end of all voluntary action possible to moral agents, then highest happiness is the ultimate end of holiness.

To prove that happiness is not the ultimate end of duty, and to establish the theory that duty is the ultimate end of itself, appears to have been the chief design of this author in this book.

One reviewer * of this work, with apparent approbation of the sentiment, says: "One of the main impressions which Dr. Hickok's treatise leaves upon the mind is, that *duty is end, in and of itself.*"

Another reviewer,† with still more decided commendation,

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* Bibliotheca Sacra, 1854, p. 183.

† Presbyterian Quar. Rev., Dec., 1855, p. 465.

expresses his view of this author's theory in this language: "*Virtue must be not a means, but an end.*"

This reviewer goes on to say: "But there is a thought which . . . must often come up to one who attentively studies Dr. Hickok's book. How are we to keep out the idea of happiness in the construction of a moral system? [Alas, alas! how shall we perform an absolute impossibility!] . . . Is it not involved in the very thought of preference [certainly]; and can there be moral action without this? [Certainly not.] We prefer, it may be said [and most truly said], we must prefer what we [voluntarily] love; the fulfilment of this preference is gratification, and gratification is happiness. The word love, too, is inseparable from enjoyment [true]; and banish love, what morality, or idea of morality, can remain? [Absolutely none at all.] Now there is a love of sensual pleasure; . . . that begins and terminates in the body [?], having no respect to the rational principle; there is the love of the fair; there is the love of knowledge; the love of truth, the love of philosophy; there is the love of benevolence [i. e. benevolent love]. Higher than all these [?], there is the love of right, or of what Dr. Hickok calls 'spirit-worthiness.' And is there not as rich, as intense an enjoyment in the gratification of this love of right, as of any that rank in the lower departments? 'O, how love I thy law!' . . . The Scriptures are full of this love of righteousness, and the intense emotion of joy it creates in the soul. 'Thy word is pure, therefore thy servant loveth it.' . . . No sensual delight can be compared to it. . . . It is 'the joy of the Lord;' it is the 'fulness of pleasure at God's right hand.' It is no sensuous thought of heaven, but the contemplation of the everlasting righteousness that is thus described."

"Here, then, in the love of this exalted worthiness, there is happiness of the purest form; there is an intense joyous emotion, — an exulting, triumphant, rapturous swell of feeling."

Now comes *the question:* "How, then, build the right, or a system of morals, on any foundation that would [*seem*, in its rejection of this idea of happiness, to ignore the only spring, not only of all human, but of all spiritual action? So the objec-

tion might be stated. [Very well.] No one can deny that we have stated it fairly and strongly." — Pres. Quar. Review, pp. 465, 466.

Reply. *Fairly*, it may be admitted, but not quite *strongly* enough. Now, if our respected but unknown reviewer would consider this objection against the doctrine in hand, so as to perceive its full weight, we think he would see that it not *only seems* to *ignore*, but that it does in *fact, in reality, absolutely*, and forever ANNIHILATE the "*only spring*" of all moral action. And then he would not say again, as he has said, "The *answer* is prompt, is easy, and, if we mistake not, perfectly conclusive." Now let us be careful here; "Do not err, my beloved brethren." If there can be no desire to obtain or promote any object whatever, the attainment of which, it is perceived, would afford no gratification, — not the least degree of satisfaction, pleasure, or happiness; if there can be no motive without a desire; if there can be no voluntary action without a motive; if nothing can possibly be chosen which is not desired, and does not seem desirable; and if ability is commensurate with obligation, then *this objection* (to the doctrine that virtue is not a means, but an ultimate, final end; that duty, obligation, right, has no relation to, but is wholly independent of, any idea of happiness) *is founded* on the immovable rock of the universal consciousness and common sense of mankind, and upon the rock of eternal truth.

If Dr. Hickok and his reviewers will fix their minds carefully on this objection, it is difficult for us to conceive how they can fail to regard it as unanswerable and fatal.

But now let us look at the answer which our reviewer says "the author furnishes . . . in his chapter on the ultimate rule of right. This distinction, on which the answer rests, pervades the whole of that argument; but it may be regarded as condensed in these few sentences: '1st. We thus find two distinct kinds of good; one as it ministers to gratification, the other as it fills the sentiment of the reason. 2d. One is a means to be used for an end, and is thus a *utility;* the other is an end in itself, and is thus a dignity (or worth). 3d. One is measured

by the happiness which it confers as a means of gratification; the other by the [*complacency* it secures in the end of its own excellency.'"

We cannot see that this answer meets the argument of the objection at all. What does it amount to? Of the two kinds of good in attempt described in it, 'one is a means of happiness and is thus a utility.' The value of this good is measured by the happiness it confers. Very well. The other is described as "end in itself." And yet it *fills* the *sentiment* of the reason. Now what is this sentiment of the reason? Is it a state of the intellect or of the sensibility? What can that state be in which the sentiment of the reason is filled, but the highest degree of happiness? And it also *secures* complacency. This latter kind of good, then, inasmuch as it fills sentiment and secures an object, is a means as well as the first kind of good is, and means to an end beyond itself, and therefore cannot be an ultimate, final end; and it is a means of securing *complacency*, but complacency is pleasure, is *happiness*. Here then, we have it. Both these kinds of good are means of happiness as their ultimate end, after all. If, then, a mind having all the acuteness, discipline, learning, skill, and honesty of Dr. Hickok, cannot introduce to our thoughts any other good, besides happiness and the means of happiness, we may feel safe in view of the reasons which we have so often stated, for believing and continuing to maintain the doctrine, that holiness has the inseparable relation to happiness, of means to their ends.

Surely, our reviewer was right, when he made the very appropriate admission: "It is difficult, we admit, to show how virtue can be conceived of, without some relation to happiness." Virtue having no relation to happiness, cannot be conceived of, and the reason is, no such virtue can exist. In fact, no voluntary moral action can be performed, which has no relation to happiness. That virtue does, and must, in the unchangeable nature of things, have the relation to happiness, of intent and tendency to promote it, is reason enough why it should be so difficult to show how such a conception can be formed of it as excludes all idea of happiness, and all relation to happiness, and

therefore this relation of holiness to happiness constitutes it a relative, in distinction from an ultimate and final good.

The doctrine that duty is a final end, makes it quite as difficult to find the foundation of obligation to perform it, as it was for the ancients to conceive on what foundation the earth ultimately rested, because all the foundation which they could imagine, must itself finally rest upon nothing, and therefore they could conceive for the earth no ultimate foundation at all. It is not at all surprising, that the notion in question led this reviewer to think of virtue that "it passeth knowledge and all understanding;" and to term it an *unknown quantity*. *We* admit, that this notion of virtue *eludes all understanding*.

We believe if virtue is not relative good, having happiness for its ultimate end, obligation must stand upon nothing; and therefore we believe, that the doctrine that holiness is relative good, and founded in benevolent utility or usefulness, or in what Edwards terms *communicating good*, rests on the foundation of eternal truth, from which no transcendental mysticism, no Germanizing philosophy, or French philosophy, nor theologizing philosophy, nor any other philosophy, will ever be able to remove it, and not even permanently to befog or obscure it

Again; that virtue is ultimate, final end in itself, is not proved by saying, true virtue "cannot be sacrificed for any thing else, without unavoidable debasement and contempt." — Pres. Quar. Review, p. 436. This does, indeed, imply that nothing else is of *greater* value, but not that the whole value of virtue does not depend upon, and consist in its relation to, an ultimate, final end beyond itself, as an object to be gained by itself.

It is also true, that the highest, greatest *happiness* cannot be sacrificed, without debasement and contempt, because it cannot be sacrificed without sacrificing holiness along with it. (See q. 103 and 104.) But yet it does not therefore follow, that happiness is higher in the sense of being holier than holiness, nor even so high as to be holy at all, even in the least possible degree. Happiness is not holiness in the least conceivable degree. Holiness and happiness may with propriety be distinguished as entirely distinct things, so that one is not the other, although

they are inseparably connected with, and most intimately related to, each other. One produces the other. If we were to admit, as we must, that happiness is the final object which must be aimed at, in all voluntary moral action, and therefore in all holy action, it would not follow, as suggested by this reviewer, that happiness would be *holier* than holiness, nor that it would partake in any degree of the moral quality of holy action.

Again; holiness is not proved to be ultimate, by saying that "children manifest the deep conviction of the superiority of the *ought* above all the cravings of *want*. . . . All human speech evinces the universal conviction. All language distinguishes the *ought* from the *want*." — Pres. Quar. Review, p. 436, quoted from Moral Science, pp. 50, 51. True; there are wants which are not virtue. Air, light, food, drink, health, knowledge, and many such things, are *wants*, but do not belong to the same category with *ought*. Happiness, and many of the natural means, in distinction from the holy means of happiness are wants, but they are not holiness. But yet, notwithstanding all this, holiness is a universal, most needful, imperative want, and is infinitely more worthy of the strongest desire, which is possible to the human mind, than any *mere worldly* good is. It stands out from all earthly things, as the *one thing needful*. And therefore our reviewer uttered most important truth when he said, "it is what the rational soul should strive for, as something it ought to have and *must* have, whatever amount of misery may [justly be supposed to] be involved in the struggle." — Ibid. p. 464. Is not holiness, then, a *want?* Certainly. And this Prof. Hickok in his Moral Science represents it to be, by saying, "Piety . . . is . . . the deepest want of the soul." — p. 326.

As to what we have just quoted in regard to the convictions of children, it may well be thus questioned. Do children know that there is any such idea as *ought*, before they know that they have desires which they *ought* to gratify, or before they know that others have desires which they *ought* to gratify. They do know very early that they ought to please their parents.

But the reviewer proceeds: "We *must* have a moral system, a supreme moral excellency. If it cannot be found, there-

fore, in the world of happiness [and want] or of *pleasure-seeking* for ourselves, and a pleasurable *pleasure-wishing* for others, then we must seek it in a region which transcends. There must be this higher something as the only [*satisfaction* for the ought."—Ibid. p. 438. Ah! *Alas! Satisfaction!* But *satisfaction* of the desire for the ought, after all, is happiness, and so it will forever *continue* to be. A virtue,—*a supreme moral excellency*, which has no relation to happiness, and which does not consist in seeking happiness, either for ourselves or others, surely cannot be found *in the world of happiness:* therefore, if found at all it must be found in some higher transcendental region, where happiness can never come. Neither this author, nor any one of his reviewers, have been able as yet to introduce us to a region so high as this. The highest transcendental region which even they have been able to reach by the utmost stretch of their imaginations, is to have in it a *satisfaction.* And that satisfaction must be the highest in kind and degree. John, the Revelator, once said, "I saw a great white throne and him that sat on it, before whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them." So no more can there be found a place for that transcendental region high enough for a holiness which is to have no relation to happiness, and is not to consist in seeking happiness for ourselves or others; for wherever God reigns, holiness must consist in pleasing him and in seeking to promote the highest happiness of his kingdom. Therefore, willing or unwilling, we are driven to the inevitable conclusion that a holiness which does not consist in any form of seeking happiness, and which must have no relation to happiness, and is *independent of the idea of happiness*, cannot have a being where God maintains his moral government.

But this reviewer, in a still further effort to find this transcendental region of virtue, says, "There *must*, then, be something above this,—a right, or righteousness *per se*, an absolute *agathon*, a '*spirit worthiness*' not resolvable into happiness, or the love of happiness, or the *aim* or desire to promote happiness; and this had better be taken, even if we have thus to

take it, as an unknown quantity." — Pres. Quar. Review, p. 438.

Here we see again, when transcendental mysticism tries to conceive and express the idea of a holiness which is in itself ultimate and has no relation to happiness, nothing is brought forth after all but an *unknown*, and we may add, an unknowable, unthinkable, inconceivable something, or more properly a nothing, called a *quantity*.

An *aim* implies an *object* aimed at, an object outside of and beyond itself. The aiming and the object are two distinct things, as really as choice and the thing chosen are two things. Therefore neither aim nor choice can in their own nature be ultimate. But the *objects finally* aimed at and chosen *alone are ultimate.*

If the love of and the *aim* to promote the greatest happiness of sentient beings in general is not true virtue, then the Edwardses, Bellamy, Hopkins, Andrew Fuller, Emmons, the Bibliotheca Sacra (1853, Review of Edwards), and (as we think) the common sense of New England and all the world besides, have been on this point most deeply in the wrong, and very wofully mistaken. We have given the testimony of the Bible on this point in another place (q. 274).

Again: That this reviewer in his transcendental flight, cannot soar high enough to find the region where there can be a holiness, that is an unknown quantity, having no relation to happiness, fully appears from the following statements which he afterwards made, as well as from the statements already quoted: "Ethics by itself is a pure, intelligible science; it is as purely scientific as mathematics." "The Bible assumes that men can know these relations, and the duties that spring out of them."— p. 453. Surely, then, virtue has relations that can be known, and the idea of moral excellence is not an unknown, unknowable, inconceivable something which cannot be defined. It can therefore be no rational objection to the theory of benevolent usefulness that it is so easily understood, that "the way-faring man, though a fool, shall not err therein."

Again: "Human duties are modified by what God has re-

vealed to us of the human fall and human redemption, and so they are by all the degrees of human culture, and all the circumstances of human history; but their ground remains the same; their general relation to the rank and worth of the human spirit, remains the same. Their connection, too, with human happiness, whether as means or end, remains the same."

Duties, we see again, spring out of relations, and must have a relation to, and cannot be performed without any idea of, happiness, and no duty can be conceived of "which is independent of the idea of happiness."

Again: "There are but two distinct opposing views. . . . One makes the moral character of acts to be determined by the amount of happiness they tend, or are *intended* to produce. The other refers them to some higher good than happiness, whether it can define it or not, — a good which may include happiness . . . , — a worthiness of the soul, in itself and in its relations to other souls, especially the Great Soul; of which spiritual state the production of enjoyment, or the [*intent* to produce [*enjoyment*, is one, though not the chief excellency." — Pres. Quar. Review, p. 455. That good which may include happiness, and of which the production of enjoyment is only one excellency, is not independent of all idea of happiness. 'There is, indeed, a happiness, — an enjoyment in the love of right, with which no sensual joy can be compared.'

After all, this reviewer with his author fails entirely of expressing an "idea of the good, or that which has a worth of its own, independent of [its relation to] happiness." Now, therefore, we think it was very becoming in this writer, especially after his own rich experience of the difficulty in the case, that he should make the confession, "It is hard to oppose logically this happiness scheme" of benevolent usefulness. Logically to oppose a doctrine founded on self-evident, eternal truth, always will be hard.

Here let us carefully notice: 'What is the ultimate rule of right, — of that duty which is end in itself and of itself, — of that virtue which must be not a means but an end,' and which,

according to these writers, so far transcends the law of impartial, benevolent usefulness? It is this, "Act worthy of that rational, immortal, spiritual being which God has made you." Very good indeed so far, if this were all. It is the *theory* set forth in connection with this rule to which we object. Our object so far has been to show its contrariety to reason and sound philosophy. Its opposition to the Bible we have shown in other places.

When a man obeys the law of impartial, benevolent usefulness, by doing all he can to please God, and to make his kingdom happy, he will obey the law of rectitude, and act worthy of the true nature and dignity of a rational being, therefore greatest happiness must be the ultimate object of that action which is worthy of a rational being. Suppose, then, we adopt the rule to 'act worthy of the rational, immortal, spiritual beings which God has made us;' the law of benevolent usefulness, which requires us to act with reference to the highest good and happiness which we can promote in the universe, shows more plainly and fully how to act in a manner worthy of a rational, immortal being, and therefore the main, if not the only difference (aside from the explanation of the worthiness theory), between the two rules or two forms of the rule, is that the law of benevolence is plainer and more definitely shows what our duty is, and what the *ultimate object* of that duty is, and for these reasons may more justly be termed an *ultimate* rule. Impartial, universal benevolence alone, in moral action, is worthy of a rational being. And it is so, because it is the rational, intended, and necessary means of the highest universal happiness.

Dr. Hickok in another place has said: "Absurdity . . . is rooted inherently, in the doctrine itself, of greatest happiness as ultimate end. The important defect of the whole theory is, that it can possibly give no moral system." — Bib. Sac. 1856, p. 68. Of this theory, he says, "it takes *the greatest happiness*, and may be called the theory of benevolence." It has also been called *the greatest happiness theory*. Of his own theory he says, "it takes *the highest worthiness*, and may be known as THE

THEORY OF RECTITUDE." — Ibid. p. 60. These designations do not fairly *distinguish* the two theories. We claim that impartial benevolence, having for its ultimate and final object and end the greatest universal happiness, is precisely identical with, neither more nor less than, that obedience which is required by the eternal law of rectitude, equity, honor, duty, and right. This may, therefore, rightfully be called the doctrine of *Benevolent Rectitude and Utility.* It is identical with the Edwardean theory as we understand it. To distinguish the other from this, it may be termed the *Worthiness Theory of Rectitude.*

Benevolent rectitude has an ultimate object out of itself, as every intelligent choice must have. The other, or worthiness rectitude, claiming to have an end in itself and to be the end of itself, can be likened to nothing so fitly as to a circle, which, having neither beginning nor end, runs only round into itself. As it claims to have no object out of itself, it can *terminate* nowhere and upon nothing. And as there can be no foundation for such obligation, either in the nature of God, or in the nature of any created agent, nor in the nature of things created or uncreated, duty, according to this theory, can begin nowhere, and therefore can end nowhere. Therefore we submit to the judgment of a world, that such a theory of such a virtue, as that which is end in and of itself, having no final regard to the general happiness, and being entirely independent of all idea of happiness, implying an aim, which is aimed at nothing but itself, — a choice, which is a choice of nothing but itself, — a love, which is a love of nothing but itself, — we submit that such a theory has a sufficient degree of *absurdity inherently rooted in it*, to commend itself to all who fairly and fully understand it, for their immediate, utter, and final rejection. Surely such an aim is not an aim to please God, — such a choice is not a choice of God as the supreme delight and portion of the soul. Such love is not that love to God, nor that love to our neighbor, which both the first and the second command require of the children of men. All duty done is performed by, and consists in, acts of choice, — acts of voluntary love, design, purpose, intention, or aiming at some ultimate end, and that final end must

be the greatest amount of general well-being. And thus moral obligation, according to this *worthiness theory of rectitude*, is an absolute absurdity, and virtue an utter impossibility. It may be regarded as one form of the Rightarian or Independent morality.

These two theories, then, are and are confessed to be in fatal conflict. The one which stands must be the utter and final ruin of the other. And we submit to the judgment of every candid mind whether the doctrine of benevolent rectitude is in accordance with sound reason, the common sense of mankind, and the Word of God. "For God is love."

There is an able review of Dr. Hickok's Mental and Moral Philosophy in the Bibliotheca Sacra for April, 1859, the sentiments of which correspond with those of the review of Dr. Hickok's Moral Science in the Presbyterian Quarterly of 1855.

The doctrine of this reviewer and his author he represents to be, "To do that and that only which is due to spiritual excellency, is the supreme rule of all moral conduct. To be worthy of moral approbation in his own sight and in the eye of every spirit, is man's supreme good. . . . Here is a rule which is moral, and not prudential. It can urge its claims, if necessary, in the face of all prudence, and demand for its own sake that virtue be sought even if no other good should follow. [*If the soul were to seek to fulfil such a claim for the sake of some ulterior end, as though it would be holy, because and in order that it might be thus happy, the very claim that holiness be sought as an end in itself, and not as a means to any thing further, would be violated, and the soul instead of gaining its moral approbation, would be consciously degraded.*" — p. 265.

According to this it would seem to be a mistake to regard him as a virtuous man who should have any reference to the recompense of reward, or to regard as virtuous "the prudent man [who] foreseeth the evil and hideth himself." But the *simple*, who should disregard all prudence and *pass on*, might, in some supposable cases, be virtuous and thus escape punishment.

The demonstrated utter impossibility that a virtuous or any other voluntary act can be performed without an object ulterior

to itself, and the demonstrated fact that all voluntary acts of every kind must have happiness of some kind for their ultimate object, we propose as insuperable objections to the worthiness rule of duty, as stated by this reviewer as well as by his author.

Moral action of any kind, independent of the desire of happiness, is an absolute impossibility, and therefore reason must reject the statement that "Virtue is independent of the desire of happiness." — Jacobi.

This reviewer maintains that man is not such a being that to him "The supreme law . . . should be the greatest amount of happiness to be gained for himself or for the whole of which he is a part." He asks, "Can the validity and authority of such a law be urged?" — p. 263. Again: "If they are so constituted as to be the most happy themselves by conferring happiness upon others, then benevolence should be the rule, but still only as prudential, and binding the subject only because he found himself in the midst of such a constituted nature of things. A code of morals resting upon such a ground, is at the best only a calculation of expediencies, and [*the practice of virtue, in its purest form, is only the struggle after happiness as the highest good that can be obtained.* A brute does nothing less than this." — p. 264.

That there may be some prudence where there is no virtue we have shown (qs. 208, 209). But that there can be virtue where there is no prudent regard both to our own and the highest good of others, we see not how to reconcile either with the plainest dictates of reason, or with Scripture. If benevolence be not the rule, how then is "love the fulfilling of the law."

If happiness be the only possible ultimate and absolute good, as we have proved, what can the practice of virtue be but the delightful labor of aiming to promote the highest degree of it for all sentient beings including ourselves?

This writer has well and truly said, "What is the highest good for man? What are his rights and duties? These questions, which lie at the basis of ethics, cannot be satisfactorily answered without some accurate and profound knowledge of the human mind." — p. 263.

Here, then, the question arises, Which is the right view of the

nature and powers of the human mind, that in which the doctrine of benevolent rectitude is founded, or that in which the worthiness theory has its supposed foundation?

The following extracts from an article by Dr. Hickok, in the January number of the Bibliotheca Sacra, 1856, show to some extent what that view of the nature and powers of the human mind is, in which the worthiness theory has its supposed basis.

"Although here is logically the consummation of benevolence, yet it were not possible that the human mind should be satisfied with it. The susceptibility to benevolent happiness is not the highest principle in man or God." — p. 68.

"Rational spirit can form an insight of what it is, determine at once what is due to it, and what is worthy of it; and can thus sit in judgment and pass sentence upon its benevolent gratifications, and decide whether happiness that is sought in imparting is a virtue or a vice; consistent with honor and right, or dishonorable and wrong. There is thus power over, and thereby a freedom in, all this pathological benevolence, and the being knows that he is morally held to control all his happiness, even that of benevolence, by a regard to his own true dignity and worthiness. [*Thus a man will judge his logical theories, and not seldom find his logical and moral convictions directly in contradiction.**. . . *His rational spirit knows a law and an alternative force which his logical understanding cannot find nor comprehend.*" — pp. 68, 69.

Here we submit to the judgment of every rational mind, whether or not, contradiction or a "law or an alternative force which can neither be found nor comprehended by a logical understanding," can be a basis for moral obligation or for a system of morality.

"But the inherent impotency of the hypothesis [of benevolent rectitude] — is that it is a hybrid and cannot propagate itself in the line of either parent. It cannot retain its greatest happiness principle, and transmit its freedom; it cannot keep its free agency, and hold on to its paternity in benevolence. If God's highest principle of action is the gratification of a benevolent susceptibility, then he must go on communicating what he

* When convictions are in contradiction, some of them *must* be false.

finds within himself, as he is prompted by his own nature, and can never go back and judge of this nature by any ethical principles, nor control its working by any considerations of honor and right. Himself and the benevolent system he makes are both conditioned in a nature already given, and there is no alternative from the creating to the terminating act."

"There is only the sentient craving of an unerring judgment of what will satisfy it; and the unavoidable issue is that the agency must go out to get it. There is else perpetual wretchedness. God originates nothing; he only develops the nature he finds in himself."

"But, on the other hand, if God be truly a free agent and the personal originator of a free system, then must he have seen within himself a principle higher than his want of happiness in the gratification of a benevolent susceptibility, and which both prompted him to, and guided him in, his work, above all the principles of nature. A higher light must have been given in the insight of what was due to his own essential dignity and glory, and in which he might judge when the going forth of his benevolent impulses were consistent with 'honor and right,' and in this only could there have been a free capacity to guide his search for benevolent happiness, and make his benevolence in this way to be, not a constitutional sentiment, but a moral attribute, an ethical virtue."

"The attempt to stand here on the nature of free agency, and yet holding that agency by the judgment of what is greatest happiness through the cravings of an inbred nature, will inevitably share the same fate as all the former hypotheses; the position while taking a full-sighted observation for it, will logically transmute itself to another, and, instead of the delusive freedom of a constitutional susceptibility, will go over to the true liberty of a rational spirit." — pp. 71, 72.

Does the supposition that God must act from a principle of benevolence, i. e. to promote as much happiness as his almighty power enables him to do, or be wretched, prove that God in so doing is not a free agent? and, of course, that such acts and doings have nothing in them of moral goodness?

If, according to what the nature of rational, moral beings is and must be, it be a fact, as we claim to have demonstrated, that happiness must be the ultimate object and end of all virtuous as well as of all other voluntary moral action, then that view of the nature of the human mind, and of all other moral beings, from which the worthiness theory of virtue is supposed, by its friends and supporters, to result, cannot be true and right, and the worthiness theory is without foundation.

If it be impossible to the human mind that any thing but greatest happiness should be the ultimate object of virtue, then universal, impartial benevolence is virtue, and the only possible thing that is virtue; but if virtue on this ground is not possible, then it is not possible on any, and man is not a moral agent, and there is no such thing as virtue.

To prove that virtue is not possible on this ground seems to be the object of the above extracts from the writings of Dr. H. and of the reviews of his writings from which we have quoted.

The field of discussion, — the true battle-ground on which this question is to be settled, is the nature, — the true philosophy of the human mind, including also the meaning of the law of God as laid down in the Bible.

Turn we now to the review.

We have read this review with interest, on account of the doctrines discussed, — the works reviewed, and the ability, earnestness, and boldness of the writer. When such writers as the supporters of these doctrines come out against the long-settled convictions of many of the wisest, ablest, and best of men, they must not be offended if their statements are examined and opposed with as much frankness, earnestness, and decision, as they themselves have used.

To this review, to the doctrines which it supports, and to those on which the worthiness theory rests, we invite the candid attention of those who are in a position to influence the public mind, and if, after a thorough examination and discussion, carried on, not in the spirit of angry controversy, but in the spirit of a manly regard for truth and right, they are found to be true, let them be fearlessly supported and recommended to the accept-

ance of all who love the truth throughout the world. But if they are found wanting, let them be fairly and frankly refuted, without fear or favor in regard to their originators, defenders, or opposers. Surely the friends of these doctrines here opposed cannot object to the course we recommend.

When the claim is put forth by so able a writer as our reviewer is, in one of our most learned and deservedly influential quarterlies, that the *doctrines* on which the spiritual excellency or worthiness theory of virtue rests, "represent the highest and most permanent type of American thinking," it is time that this claim should be examined by American thinkers, and the question settled, whether this type of thought corresponds with the truth, — the real facts of the subject, and whether it is therefore *worthy* to be permanent, or that a more rational, profound, correct, and truthful style of thought is demanded by the exigencies of the times, and by the interests of mental, moral, and theological science.

SECTION IV.

COMPARISON OF THEORIES. — EXTRACTS FROM WHEWELL, POPE, MILTON, AND HOMER.

The worthiness theory of virtue appears to agree substantially with the Cousinistic (though expressed in different language, and by a different terminology), with the exception that Cousin claims that, by a virtuous act, a man may sacrifice his highest good, and bring himself to ruin; while the supporters of the worthiness theory admit that virtue *does* secure highest happiness.

The Bibliothecan and the Edwardean theories agree in regarding happiness as the ultimate object of virtue; while the worthiness and Cousinistic theories agree in denying that happiness is the ultimate object of virtue. The Cousinistic, the Bibliothecan, and the worthiness theories agree in the supposition, that the idea of the virtuousness of an act is a necessary and simple idea.

The theory of virtue maintained by Pres. Mahan, formerly of Oberlin College, agrees with the Edwardean theory in regarding happiness as the ultimate object of right action, with some exceptions. It agrees also with the Edwardean, the Cousinistic, the Bibliothecan, and the worthiness theories, in maintaining that moral quality pertains only to *voluntary* action. These five theories all agree that nothing is holiness or sin but *voluntary* action.

The theory of Mahan regards "virtue as a state in which all beings and objects known to us are esteemed and treated according to their intrinsic worth, and for this reason only." Or, "Virtue is a compliance with all moral relations." "If it be asked why we ought to love our neighbors as ourselves, the only answer . . . is this: his interest is of the same intrinsic value as ours." Fairly understood, these statements appear to be true, because they imply that we should endeavor, according to our ability and opportunity, to promote the true interests and happiness of all, according to our opportunity and knowledge of its proportionate worth. Who can say that this is not, according to the true Bible view, Benevolent Utility?

Again; Mr. Mahan says: "That we should [*interest* ourselves in the well-being of others, is a first truth of universal reason." "God is represented in the Bible [and in the works of nature] as deeply interested in all that concerns our well-being." These statements being true, greatest happiness is the ultimate object and end of virtue. This principle is fundamental, and, followed to its legitimate results, it would lead to a true theory of virtue. To establish, as Mr. Mahan has done, such a principle as this, furnishes a very solid foundation on which to refute all the arguments which he has brought against the doctrine that the ultimate object of virtue is utility, or that obligation is founded in the relation of virtue to happiness as its ultimate object.

Pres. Mahan's theory agrees with the Bibliothecan, the Cousinistic, and worthiness theories, in holding that the idea of virtue is a simple and necessary idea, which cannot be analyzed into simpler elements.

The Edwardean theory, as we understand it, implies that, inasmuch as virtue itself is a complex object, resolvable into various elements, the idea of virtue must be not a simple, but a complex idea. To this theory we have no objection. Each of these other theories, so far as they are in opposition to the truth, in our view, contains truth enough in itself, carried out to its legitimate results, to remove its own errors; and they all contain truth enough, in the same way, to demolish each other's errors. All these theories agree with ours in holding that the idea of virtue is a necessary idea, as necessary to the rational mind as the idea of space. We think it difficult to find a theory that has ever been offered to the world, which does not contain truth sufficient, if fairly traced to its proper results, to establish the true doctrine, in which the facts, that desire of happiness comprehends all possible primary subjective motive, and that happiness is the ultimate object of all right moral action, are fundamental. It appears evident that the errors of the various theories in morals may be corrected by the doctrine that happiness is the ultimate object of all voluntary action, and therefore of all holy action, and that the desire of happiness is the primary subjective motive of all voluntary action, and therefore of all holy action. In this doctrine, we believe that a permanent basis may be established, on which the doctrine of moral obligation will permanently and finally rest.

Extracts from Whewell's Elements of Morality.*

After having nearly completed this treatise, we had opportunity to examine the Elements of Morality, by Wm. Whewell,† from which we make the following extracts, to show how far his statements coincide with, and are thus adapted to confirm, the fundamental principles which we have taken as the premises, from which our argument and investigation proceed.

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* Pronounced Hu-el.

† An English writer of eminence, and author of the History and Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences. The Elements have been used as a text-book at Yale College.

§ 37. "Every object of desire, as contemplated by the mind, may be described by a general term as a good. This is the most general aspect of the objects of desire. Opposed to the objects of desire are objects which we shun, as pain, constraint, and the want or privation of objects of desire. These are evils."

§ 60. "The term good is so used as to include all the objects of the elementary desires;" and, of course, all the objects of choice.

§ 544. "Happiness is the object of human action in its most general form; as including all other objects, and approved by the reason. . . . Happiness is conceived as necessarily an ultimate object of action. To be happy includes or supersedes all other gratifications. . . . The desire of happiness is the supreme [ultimate] desire. All other desires of pleasure, wealth, power, fame, are included in this, and are subordinate to it. We may make other objects our ultimate objects; but we can do so only by identifying them with this."

§ 573. "The supreme [we should say ultimate] object of human action is happiness. . . . The supreme rule of human action is enforced and sanctioned by a belief that it leads to the *supreme object* of human action. As the rule of temperance points to health and comfort; as the rule of respect for rights points to security and tranquillity; so the supreme rule of rightness points to happiness, which includes all other objects, and which is an internal comfort and tranquillity requiring nothing beyond itself."

§ 566. "The moral state and moral progress of each man are maintained by his own conviction of certain truths, which are the foundation of morality; and among these truths, one of the most important is this, that the course of action which is his duty is also his [*happiness*, when considered in reference to the whole of his being."

§ 574. "The subordinate rules are sanctioned by the belief that they lead to their respective results;" i. e. that they promote happiness.

§ 537. "Pleasure arises from our attaining the objects of

our desires. It is what we feel when our desires are satisfied, or in some measure gratified."

But a little reflection will be necessary to see, that desire of happiness includes all the springs of action named by Mr. Whewell in the following citations, and that it is therefore generic desire.

§ 25. "The springs of action in man may be enumerated as follows: the appetites, or bodily desires; the affections [or affectional desires]; the mental desires; the moral sentiments, and the reflex sentiments."

§ 28. "The affections are tendencies or cravings [or desires] towards conscious individuals." Under this head he includes the passions.

§ 545. "Since happiness is necessarily the supreme [or rather ultimate] object of our desires, and duty the supreme rule of our actions, there can be no harmony in our being, except our happiness coincide with our duty. That which we contemplate as the ultimate and universal object of desire, must be identical with that which we contemplate as the ultimate and supreme guide of our intentions."

§ 61. "It appears from what has been said, that the different kinds of springs of action are distinguished by their different objects. The appetites have for their objects things; the affections, persons; the mental desires, abstractions; and the reflex sentiments have for their objects the thoughts of other persons, or our own, about ourselves."

"The springs of action which we have enumerated, do not operate upon man as forces operate upon inert matter. They all operate through the will. A man is moved by these springs, when he will do that to which they impel him. Different springs of action may operate at the same time, and with opposite tendencies. The desire of safety would keep the soldier or sailor at home, but the desire of gain or glory sends him to [sea or to the war. In either case, it is through the will that the desires act [i. e. when they result in voluntary action]. He stays at home, because he wills to do so; or he goes forth, because he wills it."

§ 15. "An action that proceeds from my will or volition, is *my* act. . . . Human actions suppose the freedom of the agent."

§ 548. "We may remark, that according to the explanation given above, of the conception of happiness, it is quite true that we ought to act so as to increase as much as possible our own happiness and the happiness of others. . . . Since happiness is the ultimate object of our aims, and includes all other objects, whatever else we aim at, we identify with happiness. Whatever other end we seek, we seek that as the far end."

All this from Whewell so far, seems fully to coincide with the results of our own inquiries; but how this author can reconcile all this, and the main drift of his reasoning, with what follows, is more than we can comprehend.

§ 538. "If pleasure be the highest object of human action, nothing can be absolutely right; nor can be right in any other sense, than as the right road to pleasure. [*If pleasure be the object of human action, we must reject duty as the guide of human actions.*"

This seems to be directly in contradiction to many plain assertions of our author above quoted, and directly in opposition to the principles on which the reasoning of his book is founded. — (See above, § 537.) "Put this and that together." — Dr. N. Emmons. If this humble page should ever meet the eye of this learned author, we very respectfully ask him for an explanation.

Extracts from the Essay on Man, by Alexander Pope, Esq.

The following lines, from the Essay on Man, by Alexander Pope, Esq., show that he saw with more or less distinctness, the fundamental principles by which the true theory of virtue must be supported: —

"Two principles in human nature reign,
Self-love to urge, and reason to restrain;
Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call,
Each works its end, to move, or govern all,
And to their proper [*operation* still
Ascribe all good, to their improper, ill.
Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul,
Reason's comparing balance rules the whole.

Man, but for that, no action could attend,
And but for this, were active to no end."

"Most strength the moving principle requires;
Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires;
Sedate and quiet the comparing lies,
Form'd but to check, delib'rate, and advise.
Self-love, still stronger, as its object's nigh;
Reason's at distance and in prospect lie;
That sees immediate good, by present sense,
Reason, the future, and the consequence;
Thicker than arguments, temptations throng.
At best, more watchful this, but that more strong.
The action of the stronger to suspend,
Reason still use, to reason still attend;
Attention, habit, and experience gains,
Each strengthens reason, and self-love restrains.
Let subtle schoolmen teach these friends to fight,
More studious to divide, than to unite.
And grace and virtue, sense and reason split,
With all the rash dexterity of wit." *

"Pleasure, or wrong, or rightly understood
Our greatest evil or our greatest good.
Modes of self-love † the passions we may call;
'T is real good, or seeming, moves them all."

"Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes,
And when in act they cease, in prospect rise;
Present to grasp, and future still to find,
The whole employ of body and of mind."‡

"God, in the nature of each being, founds
Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds;
But he framed the whole, the whole to bless,
On mutual wants built mutual happiness."§

"Oh, happiness! our being's end and aim;
Good, pleasure, ease, content! whate'er thy name."‖

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* II. Epistle, lines 53–62, 81–84.

† By "self-love" understand the constitutional endowment — the involuntary desire of happiness, sometimes called the love of happiness, belonging to the nature of man, and inseparable from it, of course possessing no moral quality. By passions, understand "modes" of desiring happiness. "For a being to love himself, is to love his own happiness." — Dr. Edwards.

‡ Ibid. 91–94. 123–126.

§ III. Epistle, 109–112.

‖ IV. Epistle, 1, 2.

"Self-love thus push'd to social, to divine,
Gives thee to make thy neighbor's blessing thine.
Is this too little for thy boundless heart?
Extend it, let thy enemies have part;
Grasp the whole worlds of reason, life, and sense,
In one close system of benevolence;
Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,
The height of bliss, but height of charity."

"Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
The center mov'd, a circle straight succeeds;
Another still, and still another spreads;
Friend, parent, neighbor, first it will embrace,
His country next, and next all human race." *

Thoughts from Milton's Paradise Lost, in Confirmation of the Right.

"Be advised.
God made thee perfect, not immutable,
And good he made thee, but to persevere
He left it in thy power; ordained thy will
By nature free, not over-ruled by fate
Inextricable, or strict necessity:
Our voluntary service he requires,
Not our necessitated: such with him
Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how
Can hearts not free be try'd, whether they serve
Willingly or no, who will but what they must
By destiny, and can no other choose?" †

"But know that in the soul
Are many lesser faculties, that serve
Reason as chief; among these fancy next
Her office holds; of all external things,
Which the five watchful senses represent,
She forms imaginations, airy shapes
Which reason joining or disjoining, frames
All what we affirm or what we deny, and call
Our knowledge or opinion; thence retires,
Into her private cell when nature rests." ‡

* IV. Epistle, lines 363–38.
† Book V. 523–534.
‡ Ibid., 100–108.

"Best are all things as the will
Of God ordained them; his creating hand
Nothing imperfect or deficient left
Of all that he had created, much less man,
Or ought that might his happy state secure,
Secure from outward force; within himself
The danger lies, yet lies within his power:
Against his will he can receive no harm.
But God left free the will, for what obeys
Reason, is free, and reason he made right."*

"He had of me
All he could have; I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall
Such I created all the ethereal powers,
And spirits, both them who stood and them who failed,
Freely they stood, who stood, and fell who fell.
Not free, what proof could they have giv'n sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love
Where only what they needs must do appear'd
Not what they would? What praise could they receive?
What pleasure I, from such obedience paid,
When will and reason (reason also is choice)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoiled,
Made passive both, had served necessity,
Not me? they therefore as to right belong'd
So were created, nor can justly accuse
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate."†

"Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill.
And binding nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will."

Pope's Universal Prayer.

"Perverse mankind! whose will created free
Charge all their woes on absolute decree;
All to the dooming gods their guilt translate,
And follies are miscall'd the crimes of fate."‡

Homer's Odyssey, translated by Pope.

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* Book IX., lines 344–352.
† Book III., 97–113
‡ Book I., 41–44.

EXTRACTS FROM GROVE, TAYLOR, AND SENECA, FOUND IN MORAL PHILOSOPHY BY REV. HENRY GROVE, A LEARNED ENGLISH WRITER OF THE FIRST HALF OF THE LAST CENTURY, MORAL GOVERNMENT BY DR. TAYLOR, AND IN SENECA'S MORALS.

"The importance of morality is just the same as that of happiness, with which it hath an immediate and necessary connection. All men desire happiness, the inclination sticks close, and is never to be put off." — Vol. i. p. 3.

"No one saith, that man *ought* to desire happiness; the reason is, that this desire is natural and uncontrollable, and therefore in general not subject to law. . . In strictness of speech man does not *make* happiness his end, but is rather *carried* towards it by an impetus of nature. In his desire of happiness he is not free, but a necessary agent; even as necessary, as he is in the appetites of hunger and thirst.

"As for happiness it is what a thinking being cannot but passionately pursue, never intermitting the degree of his motion; and therefore not to be reckoned in the number of those ends which it is our duty to propose; since nothing is a matter of duty which is not some way or other in our power." — p. 247.

i. "Strictly speaking every man is the *sole efficient* cause of his own actions. The *cause* of an action, and the *agent* or doer of it, are *synonymous* terms. Others may supply the *motives* or *grounds* of the action, they may promise or threaten or ensnare [persuade and impress motives], but this is all they can do; for the proper and immediate cause of the action rests with the agent, and with no one else.

ii. "According to the exactness of language, the *same individual* action cannot belong to more than one man; or if you will, to every single action there can be but one agent.

iii. "The *virtue* or guilt of the same numerical action is incommunicable." — Ibid. p. 237.

"*Love* regarding its object as *absent* begets desire; as present either immediately or in prospect, in reality or imagination, it breeds joy. *Love* of *desire* abstractly considered, is a *simple tendency towards good*, and retains its name of desire. . . .

Desire, being a most vigorous and sprightly principle, is the [*original* of diligence and [of all] activity. All the powers of nature without this would be dormant, and the most charming objects would be unable to provoke us to the pursuit of them." — pp. 340, 341.

"Were it not for self-love the laws of God in the present degeneracy of mankind, would be of little or no force." They could be of no force at all, in fact and according to the above citations. "Even that ingenuous obedience which good men perform to the divine commands, though it be the *immediate* fruit of *love to God*, had its first rise from *self-love*. The passion, then, is not possibly to be extinguished." — p. 345.

"Now every man's reason, at the same time that it directs him to seek his own happiness in the most likely methods of acquiring it, will tell him, that it is fit that every other man, who has not forfeited his title to it, should be happy as well as himself, and that he should contribute to it, so far at least as he will not prejudice himself by so doing. This natural reason dictates, and to this therefore the affections must be naturally inclined."

"But to proceed from reason to matter of fact; the *pity* which naturally and immediately arises in the human bosom on sight of persons in distress, and the *satisfaction* of mind which is the consequence of having removed them into a happier state, are instead of a thousand arguments to prove disinterested benevolence to be natural to man. We appeal to every man's own feeling, and may well trust the cause upon this issue. Did pity proceed from a reflection upon our own liableness to the same ill accidents which we see befall others, it were nothing to the present purpose: but this is assigning an *artificial* cause for a natural passion, and can by no means be admitted as a tolerable account of it; because *children*, and persons most *thoughtless* about their own condition and incapable of entering into the prospects of futurity, feel the most violent touches of compassion. If we reflect upon what passes within us, do we not find our compassion for others, and desire of relieving them, and our good wishes for others, and joy in their prosperity, in a thousand

instances *going before*, and *unattended* with any consideration of our being in any danger from their evils, or having any interest in [except the satisfaction derived from] their prosperity? Remove the scene to the most *distant ages* and *nations*, and we as naturally and readily *feel* for the unfortunate, and *wish well* especially to the honest, the kind, the brave, and well deserving, and enjoy peculiar *satisfaction* in their prosperity."

"Whatever conduct or behavior proceeds from a prevailing regard to my own real improvement and happiness, and amicable affections towards other beings ['or love to being in general'] that come within my cognizance, is demonstrably right." — pp. 30, 31, 32.

"The *internal* principles . . . are three in number; [*Inclination*, *Reason* or *Understanding*, and *Will*."

"*Inclination*, though it be a principle, is never to be made the immediate rule of action." — p. 133. If the clue, given in the statement of these three principles, to the formation of the true analysis of the human mind, had been duly improved from the time it was given, an incalculable amount of error might have been swept away and future error prevented, and an immense amount of truth discovered and of good secured.

"Natural laws are founded in the immutable natures and relations of things, carry their own recommendation with them, and were it not for the depravity of mankind, would not need a supernatural light for the discovery of their reasonableness and obligation." — Vol. ii. p. 7.

"The *law* of *nature* . . . is the fundamental law, upon which all other laws, whether divine or human, are built, and the *great fountain* of *moral truths*." — p. 26.

"The *command* of the *means* is included in the command of the *end*." — Ibid. p. 18.

"It is in the conformity of our wills to right reason that the . . . nature of virtue consists." — p. 115.

"From the nature of *virtue*, . . . it is very easy to form a *notion* of *vice*. *Vice*, then, is the settled bent of the *will* to actions dissonant to *right reason* dictating *duty*." "Vice or moral evil has no other beginning than the freedom of the will." — p. 128.

Moral quality, then, is predicable only of acts of the will, so that neither holiness nor sin can be found aside from acts of will or voluntary exercises.

"All men have their rights and properties. One man has a claim to this thing, another to that, one man to more of this world, another to less. He who is born to *least*, is born with a *right* to *life*, *liberty*, and *safety*." — p. 252. Here we have the substance of our bill of rights as set forth in the declaration of independence.

"And then as to that charming delight which immediately follows the giving joy to another, or relieving his sorrow; and which, when the objects are numerous, and the kindness of importance, is really inexpressible, what [*can* this be owing to? . . The conscience [consciousness] of approving one's self a benefactor to mankind, is the noblest recompense of being so; [*doubtless* it is, and the most interested cannot propose any thing so much to their own advantage; notwithstanding which the inclination is unselfish. The pleasure which attends [or constitutes] the gratification of our hunger and thirst, is not the cause of these appetites; they are previous to any such prospect; and so likewise is the desire of doing good, with this difference, being seated in the intellectual part, this last, though antecedent to reason, may yet be improved and regulated by it, and is no otherwise a virtue than as it is so." — pp. 346–349.

It seems here needful to remark, that benevolence, i. e. good-will to others in limited circles, may be disinterested in the sense above expressed, and yet not partake of the holy quality of universal or general benevolence, or *good-will to being in general.* To set this matter in its true and proper light we cite the following from the second volume on the Moral Government of God, by Dr. Taylor, late Prof. of Theology in Yale College, p. 257.

"When, however, we contemplate justice or veracity, or any particular disposition, purpose, volition, separately from, or as not including either the selfish or benevolent principle of the heart, it is neither morally right nor morally wrong. At the same time it must be admitted that justice, veracity, etc., each

being conceived as a particular subordinate purpose or disposition without general benevolence, and including its appropriate executive action, are in some sense *right*, but not *morally right*. They are *right*, as they are fitted to promote some limited good necessary to the general good. It may be truly said of any of these particular acts, that it ought to be done. But its *rightness* or *oughtness* is not a *moral* [*holy*] rightness or *moral* [*holy*] oughtness, for this is a predicate only of (general) benevolence, or that which includes it. The *rightness* or *oughtness* of any particular subordinate disposition or purpose and its executive action, without including benevolence or selfishness, is the same kind of rightness or oughtness in relation to the end of action, which is predicable of the structure of a watch or a pen in relation to the end for which it is made — that is, a mere *natural fitness*. The particular virtues of justice, veracity, etc., differ from benevolence considered as the governing principle of the heart, not as excluding it, for as virtues they necessarily include it; but as including something more, viz. particular subordinate dispositions, purposes, to perform the particular actions which are necessary to the production of the general good. Benevolence, as the term is employed in this connection, is a governing, practical principle — a controlling disposition or purpose to secure the highest well-being of all by all those particular affections, etc., and executive doings which are necessary to accomplish this end, while each particular virtue of this class consists of benevolence, which prompts the particular affection, purpose, etc., and in the particular affection, etc., which is prompted by it."

To return to our quotations from Grove: —

"Society could not subsist but by the succor it borrows from *hope* and *fear* [or desire to gain happiness and shun misery]; neither could *religion* be kept up but by the same means. Nothing but these can ordinarily restrain men from vice, or invite them to the practice of virtue; and they are the mainsprings of action, and rewards and punishments are the weights which put these wheels and springs in motion." — p. 380.

"Man never exerts himself but when he is roused by his

[*desires;* while they lie dormant, and there is nothing to raise them, his excellence and abilities will be forever undiscovered." — p. 285.

Is duty commensurate with our ability to know and do it?

"The fundamental duty of all morality is a sincere endeavor to know, and, as far as known, to perform all the duties we stand obliged to." "We can do no more than *inquire impartially*, and then honestly act according to the best judgment we can make of those things, after having inquired into them; all beyond this is impossible, and therefore no part of our duty."

Extracts from Seneca's Morals, in favor of the right.

"Virtue, I know, rests in the *intent*." — p. 19.

"It is agreed upon at all hands, that '*right reason is the perfection of human nature*,' and wisdom only the dictate of it. The greatness that arises from it is solid and unmovable; the resolutions of wisdom being free, absolute, and constant; whereas folly is never long pleased with the same thing, but still shifting of councils and sick of itself. There can be no happiness without constancy and prudence." — p. 96.

"The blessing of wise men rests in the joy they take in the communication of their virtues. If there were nothing else in it, a man would apply himself to wisdom, because it settles himself in a perpetual tranquillity of mind."

"Virtue is that perfect good which is the complement of a *happy life;* the only immortal thing that belongs to mortality." — p. 98.

"We must labor and climb the hill, if we will arrive at virtue, whose seat is upon the top of it." "Reason does not encounter this or that vice by itself, but beats down all at a blow." — p. 106.

"There is not any thing in this world, perhaps, that is more talked of, and less understood, than the business of a happy life. It is every man's wish and design; and yet not one of a thousand that knows wherein that happiness consists. We live, however, in a blind and eager pursuit of it; and the more haste we make in a wrong way, the further we are from our journey's

end. Let us, therefore, *first*, consider *what we would be at;* and, secondly, which is the readiest way to compass it." — p. 89.

"Human happiness is founded upon wisdom and virtue. . . . Wisdom is a right understanding, a faculty of discerning good from evil; what is to be chosen, and what rejected; a judgment grounded upon the value of things, and not upon the common opinion of them; an equality of force, and a strength of resolution. It sets a watch over words and deeds." — p. 93.

"If it be true, that the *understanding* and the will are *the two eminent faculties* of *the reasonable soul*, it follows necessarily, that *wisdom* and *virtue* (which are the best improvement of these two faculties) must be the perfection also of our *reasonable being*, and, consequently, *the undeniable foundation of a happy life.* There is not any duty to which Providence has not annexed a blessing; nor any institution of heaven which, in this life, we may not be the better for; nor any temptation, either of fortune or of appetite, that is not subject to our reason; nor any passion or affliction, for which virtue has not provided a remedy." — p. 108.

"There is no man but approves of virtue, though few pursue it; we see where it is, but we dare not come at it." — p. 128.

"There is not in the scale of nature a more inseparable connection of cause and effect, than in the case of happiness and virtue; nor any thing that more naturally produces the one, or more necessarily presupposes the other. . . . All the actions of our lives ought to be governed with a respect to good and evil. And it is only reason that distinguishes; by which reason we are in such a manner influenced, as if a ray of divinity were dipped in a mortal body; and that is the perfection of mankind."

"The foundation of true joy is in the conscience."

"It is every man's duty to make himself profitable to mankind." — pp. 131, 132.

"We must not live by chance; for there is no virtue without deliberation and election. And where we cannot be certain, let

us follow that which is most hopeful and probable. Faith, justice, piety, fortitude, prudence, are venerable, and the possessions only of good men."

"It is a great weakness for a man to value himself upon any thing, wherein he shall be outdone by fools and beasts. We are to consider health, strength, beauty, and other advantages of that kind, only as adventitious comforts; we may preserve them with care, provided that we be always ready to quit them without trouble. There is a pleasure in wickedness, as well as in virtue, and there are those that take glory in it too; wherefore our forefathers prescribed for us the *best* life, and not the most plentiful, and allowed us pleasure for a companion, but not for a guide. We do many times take the instruments of happiness for the happiness itself; and rest upon those matters that are but in the way to it. . . . We are for one thing to-day, another thing to-morrow, so that we live and die without coming to any resolution; still seeking that elsewhere, which we may give ourselves, that is to say, a good mind." — pp. 387, 388.

"It is dangerous for a man too suddenly or too easily to believe himself. Wherefore let us examine, watch, observe, and inspect our hearts, for we ourselves are our greatest flatterers; we should every night call ourselves to an account, — *what infirmity have I mastered to-day? what passion opposed?* what temptation resisted? what virtue acquired?" — p. 130.

SECTION V.

DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT, OR RIGHTARIAN MORALITY.

Various moral theories may be included under two opposite views which have been adopted concerning the nature of morality, first, the utilitarian, that the rightness of right moral actions depends upon the ultimate, good, and valuable ends or objects purposed or chosen in those actions; second, the anti-utilitarian, sometimes termed rightarian, viz. that the right of

certain actions, and the wrong of certain other actions, are inherent in the actions themselves, and independent of all their relations to, and of all their connections with, happiness or misery.

The first of these views (perhaps by way of disparagement) has been called *dependent* morality, or the morality of consequences, because dependent on consequences. The second (possibly for the purpose of extollation) has been termed *independent* morality, inasmuch as independence is more exalted than dependence, and because of its independence of consequences. The supposition that a moral choice should be made and continue to exist, irrespective and independent of any and all effects, results, consequences, ends, and objects intended and chosen, or that the moral character of a choice should not depend at all upon the object chosen to be accomplished, is an absolute impossibility, a thing impossible to be thought, and inconceivable to be done, because it involves a positive contradiction and a complete absurdity. By this most manifest and undeniable fact, the vain notion of independent morality seems to us to be at once and utterly demolished. On how much better a foundation than this, any of the anti-utilitarian theories are based, we leave for those to judge who are able and willing to determine for themselves where the truth lies.

According to the first of the above theories, the intrinsic value of the happiness promoted by virtue is one element in the ground of obligation, and power to promote happiness the other, or rather both these grounds are implied in the power to promote happiness. According to the other, obligation does not rest nor depend at all upon the value of the good promoted by virtue, nor is the desire of happiness a possible motive to virtue, nor can happiness be either the subjective or objective, ultimate object of virtue. The truth concerning this so-called theory of *independent morality*, which we claim to have proved, is, that, according to it, there neither is nor can be any ground whatever for the existence of moral obligation to any creature, for this one plain and simple reason, that the theory takes away the possibility of complying with such obligation.

Some of the most eminent supporters of the first of these theories, viz. of dependent morality, are Aristotle of Stagira, Seneca, Bishop Richard Cumberland of England, John Locke, Bishop George Berkeley, John Brown, Henry Grove, the Edwardses, father and son, Drs. Timothy Dwight and Nathaniel Wm. Taylor. The principles of this theory are found also in Butler's writings and Bellamy's, and we think also in the writings of Rev. Andrew Fuller.

"Probably no mind outside of the pale of Christianity, has made a more discriminating and truthful representation of the natural sentiments of the human mind than Aristotle." — Prof. Shedd, Bib. Sacra, 1859, p. 736.

Aristotle says, "Now the end being an object of volition, and the means objects of deliberation and deliberate preference, the actions which regard these must be in accordance with deliberate preference, and voluntary. . . . And virtue also must be in our power; and in like manner vice: for whenever we have the power to do [an act], we have also the power not to do [that act]; and whenever we have the power not to do, we have the power to do."

"Vice is voluntary. Or else we must contradict what we have just said, and deny that man is the origin and the parent of his actions, as of his children. But if this appear true, and we have no other principle to which we may refer our actions than those which are in our power, then those things, the principles of which are in our power, are themselves also in our power, and voluntary; and testimony seems to be borne to this statement both by private persons individually, and by legislators themselves; for they chastise and punish those who do wicked deeds, unless they do them upon compulsion, or through an ignorance for which they [the legislators] are themselves to blame; and they confer honor on those who do good actions, with a view to encouraging the one and restraining the other.

"And yet no person encourages us to do those things which are neither in our power nor voluntary, considering it not worth while to persuade us not to be hot, or cold, or hungry, or any thing of this kind; for we shall suffer them all the same."

"If, then, as is said, the virtues are voluntary, . . . the vices must be voluntary also; for they are just as much so as the virtues. Now about the virtues we have spoken generally, . . . that they are in our own power, that they are voluntary, and that they are under the direction of right reason." — Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, pp. 66, 67, 70.

"Every art and every scientific system, and in like manner every course of action and deliberate preference, seems to aim at some good; and consequently 'the good' has been well defined as that which all things [i. e. all voluntary action] aim at." "If, therefore, there is some end of all that we do, which we wish for on its own account, and if we wish for all other things on account of this, and do not choose every thing for the sake of something else (for thus we should go on to infinity so that desire would be empty and vain), it is evident that this must be '*the good*' and the greatest [or the ultimate] good. Has not, then, the knowledge of this end a great influence on the conduct of life? and like archers, shall we not be more likely to attain that which is right, if we have a mark?"

"Since all knowledge and every act of deliberate preference aims at some good, let us show what that is. As to its name, indeed almost all men are agreed; for both the vulgar and the educated call it *happiness:* but they suppose that to live well and do well are synonymous with being happy." — Ibid. pp. 1, 3, 5.

"Morality, the quality of virtue or guilt, of praise or blame, pertains [*only* to the actions of *intelligent* and *rational* beings, and [*only* to the *voluntary* actions of such beings." "A moral act is always, I suppose, a *voluntary act.*" — Prof. Haven's Moral Philos. pp. 59, 60.

The above extracts from Aristotle show that Prof. Haven is right in saying, that "to make virtue a merely intellectual affair, overlooks, according to Aristotle, an essential element of our nature, — i. e. the moral element, the natural instinct of the soul, which demands and strives for the good, and which approves and is satisfied only with that which is right in human conduct and endeavor. Virtue, then, is not so much a thing to be

learned, as a thing to be done or practised, in the following out of this natural craving and instinct of the soul." "Nature lays the foundation [of moral obligation] in so constituting the mind that it craves and approves the good; reason and intelligence build on this foundation. . . . Our good and evil dispositions are originally in our own power. . . . The highest good, the chief end and motive of human endeavor, Aristotle concedes to be happiness in some form." — Ibid. 73, 74.

From this last cited statement of Prof. Haven concerning the doctrine of Aristotle, and according to the above quotations from the Stagirite himself, it is evident that both the doctrine of Aristotle and the teaching of Prof. Haven himself in the above statements, imply that happiness is the ultimate end of virtuous action, in other words that happiness is the ultimate good sought in right moral action, and that the constitutional craving or desire of the happiness to be found in right action, is the primary subjective motive to virtue, and an essential part of the ground of moral obligation. And further, that the ground of moral obligation consists also in the intrinsic value of that happiness which is the ultimate good, — the last object sought in and by holiness, and in the moral powers of moral agents, by which they are rendered susceptible to the influence of that object, and so rendered able to secure and promote it.

That this doctrine so clearly and manifestly implied in the teaching of Aristotle and of Prof. Haven, and withal so clearly true, should be so little understood and so poorly appreciated in the last half of the nineteenth century, seems to be a just occasion of astonishment. We are ready to ask, how can this be accounted for, except that there is either some prejudice or some love of darkness rather than light, yet remaining in the world?

Prof. Haven regards "*the eternal nature of things as the ground of right.*" After having endeavored (in plain contravention to his own teaching as shown above) to produce the most conclusive arguments against the doctrine that virtue is founded in utility, he says: "We seem to be driven, then, to the only remaining conclusion, that *right and wrong are distinctions*

immutable and inherent in the nature of things." — Moral Phil. p. 46.

To us these statements seem rather indefinite, and yet at the same time to be susceptible of a meaning exactly true, and in agreement with the doctrine of benevolent utility, the very doctrine they were intended to refute. Let us, then, understand definitely what the things are, the eternal nature of which constitutes the ground of obligation.

The only sense which accords with truth, that we can perceive in the proposition, "that right and wrong are distinctions immutable and inherent in the nature of things," implies that obligation, in its own eternal, independent, and immutable nature is founded in the nature of moral beings, and in their relations to the happiness of all sentient beings, which is in their power to promote (for what other things than *these* can constitute the ground of obligation?), since this promotion of happiness comprehends all the duty which God requires, or which is possible to conceive of. This is the doctrine of benevolent utility or benevolent rectitude.

Now let us not be deceived by regarding the sound of words rather than their sense. Is it not true that the eternal nature of moral obligation is such, that whenever rational beings exist having the requisite powers to promote happiness, these powers, in their relation to the intrinsic value of the happiness which they can promote, constitute the foundation of the obligation of these beings to do good in the kingdom of God?

Now this seems to us to be the only true sense of the statements we are considering, and to comprehend *all* the good sense to be found in them.

As we understand the matter, Emmanuel Kant held the theory of independent rightarian morality. In his Critique of Practical Reason, he endeavored to separate and clear our moral judgments from any discerned relation to happiness or well-being. His maxim was, *do right for the sake of the right* — which, as a practical rule, is useful, and easily understood, but when exalted to a speculative criterion of moral action, involves the philosopher in self-contradiction. If we mistake not, it cer-

tainly did so involve the German sage. For in deducing and defining his general rule for moral action, he was compelled to consider its relations to the well-being of man, as the criterion of its fitness to be a general rule. Moreover, in his moral argument for the being of God, he was forced to find it in the necessity for the moral order of the universe, in other words, for a state of things in which the virtuous are made happy, and the vicious miserable.

It is now acknowledged, by the ablest German critics, that in these reasonings he came back again to the very ground of the relation of actions to happiness, which it was the object and boast of his system to escape.

We do not blame this philosopher for thus coming back to the ground which he had tried to escape, because he was compelled by the well nigh, if not quite, *irresistible* demands of common sense to do so. And so it ever must be, when men undertake to run away from common sense in their reasonings upon independent, anti-utilitarian, or rightarian morality. Common sense will be their master at last.

So it has been with our American anti-utilitarian philosophers and preachers. All who set up the claim that right is the *ultimate* end, and is independent of consequences aimed at, — consequences ultimating in happiness, when they come to treat upon practical morals, have been obliged to reason upon the ground, which, in their theories, they have repudiated. I do not know of one exception, and I never expect to know of one; for the simple reason, that common sense will not allow it. It is impossible. We believe that in the formation of practical rules of morality, it is as impossible to keep consistent with the error of the independent, rightarian morality, as it is to act consistently with the error, that there is no material world, except in ideas.

Now why should young America attempt the vain task, the more than herculean labor of inculcating, sustaining, and establishing, the repudiated errors of old Germany? Why should this be, but that 'we Americans are ever ready to dress ourselves in the cast-off clothes of other nations, without knowing

exactly what they taught, or whether their reasonings have stood the test of criticism?'

The errors of the Kantian theory of morals, have been spread far and wide by Coleridge, Cousin, and their followers in France, England, and in this country. One of the last, but by no means the least of the followers of Kant, has recently appeared in this country as the authoress of a learned work, entitled *Intuitive Morals*, and is no less involved in self-contradiction than her illustrious predecessors.

SECTION VI.

INTUITIVE MORALS.

An anonymous Essay on Intuitive Morals, was published in London in 1855, and republished in this country in 1859, said to have been written by a lady. In our judgment, this essay exhibits as much ability, learning, and excellence of style, as any thing we have seen in support of similar sentiments, not excepting the writings of Theodore Parker himself. This writer thus acknowledges her obligations to Mr. Parker: "The author's obligations to the writings of this great and brave man, will be visible everywhere to those acquainted with them."

In this treatise, some fine things, excellent, true, and right, are said. It professedly "teaches, 1st. What is the Moral Law. 2d. Where it is to be found. 3d. That it can be obeyed. 4th. Why it is to be obeyed." —p. xvi. To the teachings of this essay, we have four objections. 1st. It is self-contradictory, as well as contradictory to reason and common sense. 2d. It is anti-scriptural. 3d. It contravenes the established facts of psychology. 4th. It is *based* in a false psychology.

In establishing these objections, some things advanced in support of one of these objections, may be seen to be valid in support of some of the others.

In setting forth and confirming our *Obj.* I. viz., that the teaching of the intuitive morals is self-contradictory, as well as contradictory to reason and common sense, we have four questions to consider.

First question. What are some of the most important and fundamental principles laid down in this essay, to which we can give our full assent? Ans. 1. "The moral character of good and evil, is a real, universal, and eternal distinction, existing through all worlds, and forever, wherever there are rational free agents." — p. 4.

2. "The moral law is the resumption of the eternal necessary obligation of all rational free agents to do . . . those actions which are right." — p. 62. But this amounts only to the self-evident truism or identical proposition, that moral law, obligation, duty, requires right actions, without expressing any intimation what actions are right, which is only saying that right, duty, obligation, moral law, terms signifying the same thing, requires a certain kind of actions, called right. Right requires right.

3. "The [first] truths of morals are necessary truths. The origin of our knowledge of them is intuitive, and their proper treatment is deductive" to some extent. — p. 112. "Intuition will teach me that I must [ought to] love my neighbor." — p. 116. "We need not doubt that benevolence is right." — p. 77. "The [fundamental principles of] moral law [are] found in the intuitions of the human mind." — p. 136.

4. "Moral law can be obeyed."

5. "I have spoken of the obligation of man to obey the eternal right, considering such obligation as it is truly founded, simply on the nature of moral actions and moral agents. I have affirmed such obligation as the fundamental postulate of sound ethics, a necessary truth given in the nature of man, and incapable of demonstration as the axioms of geometry." — p. 14.

6. "The bounds to which this power of causation belonging to me extend, are the bounds of my responsibility." — p. 156. "Duty . . . always requires of us to do our very uttermost for the [*benefit* of our neighbor and the perfection of our own souls." — p. 180. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." — p. 92. "In all . . . cases the bounds of our freedom are those of our responsibility." — p. 214.

Add to the idea of benefiting our neighbor that of *benefiting* all sentient beings to the extent of our ability, and then these

fundamental principles carried out to their legitimate results, we believe would constitute a complete theory of morals, and a full support of the doctrine of benevolent rectitude.

Our second question concerning the "Intuitive Morals" is, What positions and assumptions are taken in it from which we must dissent, as subversive of the above principles and of the true theory of morals?

1. "I have sought (and this has been my chief aim) to place for the first time, as the foundation of ethics, the great but neglected truth that the end of creation is not the happiness, but the virtue of rational souls." — p. viii.

2. "That law is a bare obligation . . . standing out all the more grandly in its naked dignity when divested of extraneous authority, of a protective system of rewards and punishments, or of any end of utility whatever." — p. 10.

"Virtue as truly defined is perfectly [*antithetic* to happiness. The sacrifice which the virtuous man makes of his gratification to the law is wholly unconditional on a future increase of happiness to be gained thereby. His surrender is complete, and grounded solely on the right of the law so to command him. If he be tempted to act from desire of future happiness, his action ceases to be virtuous; if he act without any prospect or chance of future happiness, his action becomes more and more virtuous as such happiness recedes from his prospects." — pp. 38, 39.

"God . . . made us for that only end for which he could work, — immortal righteousness." — p. 169.

"The motive, therefore, which, if we are to be virtuous, must be the determining one of our moral freedom, cannot be at all in the direction of happiness." — p. 190. Of virtue this accomplished writer says, "I affirm that its essence lies in the renunciation of happiness." — p. 246.

These two sets of statements seem to us to be mutually and utterly subversive of each other. If the first statements, those to which we assent, are true, they overthrow and utterly demolish those statements cited in answer to our second question. If virtuous action can have no "end of utility," if it

"cannot lie at all in the direction of happiness," if the essence of virtue lies in the renunciation of happiness, then virtue is an absolute impossibility, as we claim to have fully proved in the previous discussion; and then, too, if a man is morally bound utterly to renounce his own happiness; to love his neighbor as he does himself, would be not to love him at all; and then, moreover, there could be no motive nor obligation to exercise benevolence, because the end aimed at in benevolence is happiness, or, as this writer says above, "duty requires us to do the uttermost for the *benefit* of our neighbor." In confirmation of these positions,

Our third question is, What are some of the numerous statements which our lady author has made (for we must not spoil the argument for the sake of the *ladyship*), inconsistent and contradictory to the main point, which it was the object of her book to establish, viz. that happiness is not at all the *ultimate* subjective end of virtue, nor the desire of happiness the subjective motive to virtue?

1. "Happiness, properly speaking, is the gratification of all the desires of our compound nature, and [*moral*, intellectual, affectional, and sensual pleasures are all to be considered as integers, whose sum, when complete, would constitute perfect happiness." — p. 218. Qualify this statement by the fact that happiness, as near perfect as is attainable, consists in the gratification of those desires only which are consistent with our highest attainable happiness, and then we think it would be true. If so, then it follows that happiness must be the ultimate gratification of the desire of right, and therefore it is proved that the ultimate subjective object and end of the desire or sense of right, or of the fulfilment of obligation, is and must be happiness.

To the same purpose we quote again: 2. "This power of the reason to attach an [*interest* of its own to the performance of its behests, was undoubtedly necessary for beings like ourselves, affected by sensitive excitements totally different in kind from the causal laws of reason. This is the internal (as all nature is the external) system of rewards and punishments

wherewith our Father guides his children towards the [*blessed end* of their creation, and upholds the *justitia rectoria* of the universe. Unconsciously this sense of pleasure in a virtuous act, the thought of the peace of conscience which will follow it, or the dread of remorse for its neglect, [*must* mingle with our motives." — p. 225.

Now this *interest* attached to right-doing, this *blessed end,* and this *thought of the peace of conscience,* which *must mingle with our motives,* include the very thing, to separate which from all its relations to right action as any part of the motive for its performance, appears to have been the chief design of the Essay. And thus that design is most thoroughly thwarted.

3. Again: "Let the [benefactor] have so managed his charity that [the beneficiary] has no knowledge of his benefactor, and let him be entirely free from all thought of buying the rewards of heaven. What will he now feel? He receives no gratitude; he entertains no new hope; but his inmost soul [*glows* with the consciousness that he has done right for the right's own sake; he feels a throb of joy, not having its origin in any gratified desire, but swelling up from the very depths of his being, where dwells the true self of self, whose law he has obeyed. *His moral sense enjoys its highest gratification.*" — p. 229.

To our mind this also is relinquishing the foundation of the whole theory.

"For the right's own sake." What else can "doing right for right's own sake" mean but doing it for the sake of the interest consciously felt in doing right, or the interest felt, and consciously felt, in the blessed results of doing right, or for the sake of gratifying the desires of the mind for right doing, and its desires for the blessed results of that doing, in the promotion of well-being? Surely nothing else.

Our fourth question on this Essay is, What has its author said which shows that happiness is and must be the *objective* end, as well as the *subjective* end, in virtuous action?

1. The quotation just made from p. 229. 2. On the eighth page of her preface she speaks of "the most *blessed* end which infinite love could desire." If there is any sense or force in

terms, what can the *blessedness* of any end be, aside from happiness? And would not a universe of perfect holiness and happiness, from the beginning onward to eternity, be a more blessed object gained, than a universe without happiness, so marred by sin as the present is?

3. "In morals, intuition will teach me that I must love my neighbor, and reflection will thence deduce that I am bound to relieve the wants of the poor to the best of my ability." . . . "Experience must teach me which way will most effectually benefit him, and then intuition will teach me that whichever [way] does so, it is my duty to pursue." — p. 116. In such a case, my neighbor's happiness is the object of my virtue. It were easy to multiply passages of this sort to a great extent. But it is needless. One more must suffice.

4. She speaks of "a life of *religion*, in which the [*delight* of God's presence, the reverence for his moral attributes, the [*desire* to obey his will, and the consciousness of his everlasting love had grown continually clearer and stronger, and of which prayer, deepest and intensest, had been the very heart and nucleus, till we had found God drawing ever nearer to us as we draw near to him, and vouchsafing to us that communion whose [*bliss* no human speech may ever tell." — p. 277.

Take out of this sublime passage the desire and the motives of happiness, of unutterable bliss, both subjective and objective, and its beauty, force, and meaning are all gone. Thus we see that this writer's own statements imply that happiness must be both the subjective and objective end of virtue.

5. To cap the climax of absurdity and contradiction, we cite two passages of a different character: "As we are not to be moral for the sake of any end, neither are we to be religious for any reward." — p. 199.

The Essay closes with this question: "Shall I be good and do good because it is right?" i. e. Shall I be disposed to do good and do it, and not feel any possible or conceivable *interest* in being good or doing good, or in the good accomplished? We are obliged to understand this question in this sense by the main drift of the Essay. Now, according to this, I must do

good to my neighbor in a state of entire indifference to his good; I must not even desire it. I must act for his good without having that good for the objective end of my action; indeed, I must act *for his good*, without having *any end* to aim at, because I am *not to be moral for the sake of any end.*

John Young, LL. D., of Edinburgh, on the 193d page of a work of his entitled "The Mystery," says: "With all possible emphasis, therefore, we repeat, that in the noblest sphere of activity, to have no end is higher than to have the highest end. The moral which finds its reason in itself is far above the merely intellectual, which contemplates ends and calculates consequences." This corresponds with the statement of our authoress, that "we are not to be moral for the sake of any end." A voluntary action that must be performed without an end, either objective or subjective, must also be performed without a subjective *motive.* We leave it to the reader to judge, whether such an action ever was, or ever can be, performed by any rational being whatever. A theory which *legitimately* and by necessity leads to such absurd results, as we think the theory of the *Intuitive Morals* does inevitably, must itself have its basis in essential error.

Therefore, these results, taken together with the answers to the above four questions, prove that the theory set forth in this Essay is self-contradictory and in opposition to reason and common sense.

Obj. II. The theory of the Essay is anti-scriptural. (See q. 273–4.) Inasmuch as this theory throughout implies that desire of happiness and dread of misery, or hope of reward and fear of punishment, as motives, vitiate the action of which they are the motives, it is *anti-scriptural*, because the Scriptures very often set forth these motives in powerful array, and oftener still allude to them, in their appeals to men to secure their virtue. The dogma, "that the end of creation is not the happiness, but the virtue of rational souls," which our authoress says it has been her chief aim to place for the first time as the foundation of ethics, is in direct opposition to Rev. 4: 11: "O Lord, thou hast created all things, and for thy *pleasure* they

exist and were created." According to this, the *pleasure* of God himself is the ultimate subjective end of creation.

Obj. III. To make virtue, and not happiness, the ultimate end of virtue, is to make it end in the absurdity of an endless series, which is to make it end nowhere, or to make the highest virtue acting without an end, as our authoress affirms it is. And thus this theory *contravenes* the established facts of *psychology.*

This dogma, which this writer attempts to place, for the first time, as she thinks, as the foundation of ethics, is directly contradicted by her own assertion, that "benevolence requires that *happiness* should be bestowed upon every sentient being." — p. 253. Again she speaks (in contradiction to her fundamental dogma) of that "almighty, changeless will which has decreed the holiness and happiness of every spirit he hath made." — p. 278. Since happiness is the result of holiness, if God has decreed both the holiness and happiness of his creatures, not their *holiness*, but their happiness, is the ultimate end of the decree. But where the evidence of such a decree is to be found, we do not know. We think the Bible most plainly teaches a contrary doctrine. Most surely, no such decree has ever yet been fulfilled. As we understand, the teachings of reason and the Holy Scriptures, neither reveal any such decree, but, taken together, they prove that there is and can be no such decree. The supposition, that God *could* decree and secure the universal and perpetual holiness and happiness of all rational spirits for this life and that which is to come, once established as truth, since he has executed no such decree, would furnish an argument against the benevolence of God which has never yet been answered, and, as we believe, never can be. But the possibility of such a decree, or its execution, as that supposed by our authoress, can no more easily be proved than the one just alluded to.

Obj. IV. Another fundamental objection we have to offer against this theory, and which we believe to be good against most of the false theories in morals, is, that it is founded in a false psychology, as well as self-contradictory. If this is a well-grounded belief, it shows the immense importance of study-

ing, so as to understand a correct psychology. Now for the proof of this.

1. This writer has truly said: "In all . . . cases, the bounds of our freedom are those of our responsibility." — p. 214. But amidst so many and plainly contradictory statements, it is very difficult, in some cases, to determine either what she really believed or meant on the whole. She speaks of "the free man, [who] therefore . . . is, *as such*, purely moral." — p. 142.

2. She says: "Moral evil, then, philosophically considered, is simply the weakness, the non-exertion, of the *homonoumenon*. It is not a *positive* thing at all. It is not a choice of vice by the *higher* self, for that self can, by the very necessity of its nature, legislate only the universal moral law. It is not a choice of vice by the *lower* self, for that self is by its nature un-moral, un-free, and incapable of determining its choice with any reference to moral distinctions; but solely according to its instincts and other solicitations." — p. 146.

3. "Of the twofold condition of man we now perceive the consequence. In the sensible world, and so far as he is subjected to its mechanic laws, he is a slave, a mere machine, acted on by instincts within and sensations from without, impinging on his sensory. In the supersensible, he is free, not governed by mechanic, but by moral laws, of which he is to himself the lawgiver." — p. 143.

4. "Again. I have already referred to the distinction between that realm of *noumena* in which we are free causes, and that world of phenomena in which we are locked up in necessity. So far as our desires are concerned, they are the result of our original nature, modified by those circumstances of our past life which have passed beyond our recall. So far as the solicitations which the external world offers to our desires, these are also independent of our choice. If, then, we merely follow our desires to their gratification, where is our freedom? It may be said that we exercise freedom in prudently postponing present to future enjoyment. But this is fallacious, and no more true freedom than that of the spider waiting till its prey is fairly entrapped. I wish not only for happiness, but for as

much happiness as I can get. That is a part of my instinctive nature not dependent on my will. If prudence, then, teach me that to obtain the greater happiness I must postpone the lesser, my determination to do so is decided by the same necessity which would have urged me to snatch at the first gratification offered." — pp. 188, 189.

From these positions, if true, it would follow:

(1.) If sin be nothing positive, if it be not choice by the higher self, nor by the lower self, then it is not voluntary transgression of law, and then it is nothing in any sense.

(2.) If men's actions in the sphere of the supersensible are free in *only* one direction, *called* right, there is in that region or sphere no *moral* freedom at all.

(3.) If, in the sphere of the sensible, men are slaves, and if, so far as influenced by their desires, their actions are necessitated, since their desires constitute all possible subjective motives, then there is in this sphere also no such thing as *moral freedom* at all, and therefore, no moral obligation, and on this ground the notion of *intuitive morals* would be a mere hallucination, and then to limit our responsibility by the bounds of our freedom would be to annihilate it.

A mental philosophy which leads to these results must be false.

A true psychology denies every one of the above positions and affirms that sin is as positive a thing as holiness is; — it is a choice made by a moral agent in the free exercise of his moral powers, in transgression of law; — in every sphere of moral action, in the sphere of the supersensible (if there be any such sphere), as well as in the sensible, and in all action influenced by desire, men are free to fulfil or violate their obligations.

Some minds of a certain class inclined to transcendentalism, may be led away by the eloquence, and the sophistic views and reasonings of the *Intuitive Morals*, but notwithstanding this, the Essay will probably result in the promotion of ethical knowledge. It carries out the anti-utilitarian theory so thoroughly to its necessary results in requiring moral action more disinterested, or rather more *un*interested, than the teaching of Jesus Christ

requires, that it will have a strong tendency to open men's eyes to the unsoundness of principles in which this and all anti-utilitarian theories are founded, as well as the unsoundness of the results in which this theory terminates. A good use *may* and probably *will* be made of this book to show the errors of the false theories, and the truth of the right theory of morality. The utilitarian and anti-utilitarian theories are in fatal antagonism. If either is true the other is not.

The comprehensive objection, to all moral theories which deny that utility is an element, essential to the foundation of obligation, is, that according to every one of them there is no *foundation* for obligation, and of course no obligation can exist, because no duty is possible on the ground of any one of them. Therefore, as we have said before, the true battle-ground on which the contest is to be decided, lies in the field of Mental Philosophy, and in the meaning of the Word of God.

F.

[Referred to p. 187.]

STRICTURES ON DR. HARVEY'S LETTERS TO DR. TYLER, REFERRED TO P. 162.

In opposition to the maxim that "ability is commensurate with obligation," Dr. Joseph Harvey, the compiler of the creed of the theological school in East Windsor, in a letter * to Dr. Tyler, the President and Theological Professor in that institution, incurred the responsibility of making the following statements: "Impenitent sinners . . . have no power to do what God requires" — that "God does require of all men what some men having unwilling minds have no power to perform."

* This letter was written to oppose a sermon by Dr. Tyler, the doctrine of which was, "God does not require of men more than they have power to perform."

In support of these views and in opposition to the above fundamental maxim, Dr. Harvey used substantially the following statements and arguments, although not in the same order. In these statements about to be quoted, if we can understand them, the terms 'right heart,' 'right disposition,' 'right affection,' are used as substantially synonymous with holy love. 'The nature of the requirement is such that sinners cannot do what God requires with no right heart, that is with no love at all.' "The law demands the heart or its affections." "If sinners can do all that God requires, with a perverse or rebellious heart, then why does the law require the affections of the heart as the first thing." "Inability consists in the want of a right disposition, or in the exercise of a wrong." "How is it true . . . that men can love God with no right affection at all, or even with hearts of enmity." "As the heart is the seat of the affections, it would seem to be the only power which is able to love." "Ability is founded on disposition." So that according to this no man has *ability* to do any duty which he has no right disposition to do, or which he is unwilling to do.

'Both [*ability and inability* to do either right or wrong depend upon the state or disposition of the heart.' Mark this. Ability and inability to perform moral acts of any kind consist in the *state* of the heart, that is, if the heart is in a right state, there is ability to perform right acts, if in a sinful state there is ability to perform sinful acts. Now according to this a right state of heart or holiness constitutes ability for holiness, and a sinful state of heart or sin constitutes ability to sin. And ability to do either right or wrong constitutes inability to perform the opposite kind of moral acts. These positions involve the absurdity that holiness already possessed is the only ability a man can have for holiness, and sin the only ability he can have for sin, thus implying that a moral being can have no power to become a sinner before he is a sinner, and no power to become holy before he is holy, — no power to perform a holy or a sinful act before he performs such act, implying also that the first holy or sinful act is performed without the power of performing it. All which is contradicted by facts.

"Ability to perform moral duty depends on the disposition, for the plain reason that moral duties require the affections of the heart, which spring from the disposition." So that 'no man can have adequate power to do that duty which he has no inclination, desire, motive, nor disposition to do.' 'To suppose that holy duties can be performed with an unholy heart, is quite absurd' [and therefore we say this supposition involves an impossibility].

"Has the sinner, being a moral agent and acting freely; has the sinner, being a sinner, a voluntary enemy to God, and impenitent in that enmity, at the same time power to love God and do all that he requires? In other words, can a man [supremely] hate and [supremely] love the same object; obey and disobey the same law at the same time?" A denial in the form of a question, — the supposition denied involves the absurdity and impossibility that a man can serve two masters — that he can both do certain things and not do them at the same time. That he can both love and not love at the same time. Or that he can do two opposite and contradictory things at once. Now what does all this arguing amount to, but that impenitent sinners, whose hearts are not right in the sight of God, have no such desires, motives, inclination, or disposition as constitute a right state of heart or holiness, and therefore that it is impossible that they should be in possession of power to do what God requires, that is, that since their hearts are unholy they have no power to become holy and do right or holy deeds.

The question now is, How far do these statements and arguments militate against the doctrine that men have the power of contrary choice, and, of course, power to do their duty, — or that ability is commensurate with obligation?

We admit as self-evident truth, that no man can do opposite and contradictory things both at once. No man can do certain things and not do them at the same time. No man can love God and not love him at one and the same time. This truth is implied in some of the above cited statements. But these statements do not make it appear that a man may not have power to love God and keep his commandments without using that

power in love and obedience. To suppose that one has power to love *and* hate supremely the same object at the same time, that is, that he can do both at once, is an absurdity. But that while he is doing one, he has power to do the other, instead of that which he is doing, is not an absurdity, but an important truth, essential to moral responsibility. That a man cannot use the power which he has to love God, in loving him supremely and in hating him supremely at one and the same time, does not imply that the power which he now uses in hating, might not, instead thereof, be used in love and obedience. A man at a given time may have power to do right, and at the same time have power to do wrong and actually use it in doing wrong, at that same time in which he might use it in doing right. Indeed it involves an absurdity to suppose that any being should have power to do either right or wrong, without at the same time having power to do the opposite of that which he actually performs.

They who hate may cease to hate and begin to love with the powers they now have, without any new powers, or any change in the powers they now have, except that they are used for a different purpose. Multitudes have done this. Men, who are now holy, but were once sinners and impenitent in their sins, have done this. They began to love with the same power with which they before had hated. They who love God and obey him, may, without any new powers, or any loss or change of powers, cease to obey and begin to disobey. Our first parents and the fallen angels did this. They sinned with the same power with which they had obeyed.

If the sinner is a voluntary, free moral agent, as he must be, or he could not be a sinner, then he has all the *power* which is essential to *constitute* him a moral agent (q. 13), all that is essential to free agency, and of course all that power which is essential, and is prerequisite both to the performance of duty, as well as to the commission of sin.

That he is voluntary in his enmity, implies that he has power to avoid it. A man cannot be voluntary in that which he has no power to avoid. There can be no choice nor voluntariness in regard to that about which only one way is possible.

The fallacy of the above reasoning of this writer, lies in assuming that the *sinner* does not, and cannot have any desire, inclination, or motive to do his duty, and that his ability for moral action consists only in his sinful disposition, which disposition, it is claimed, consists only of sinful desires and inclinations, and thus is "sin itself in its most aggravated and malignant form." Now if this be so, then all sin must be preceded by that which is sin.

If no future sin can ever be committed, until a previous sin shall take place, which is to constitute the ability to commit it, then there will never be another sin, nor another sinner. Just so in regard to holiness; if there shall never be another holy act performed until a previous holy disposition comes to pass, consisting of holy love and which is to constitute the ability or power to love and obey God, then not another holy act nor holy agent will ever come into being. In other words, if a right heart or holy love be the only adequate power to love or obey God, then there will never be another holy heart, until there shall first be a holy heart to constitute the power to have a holy heart, and then absolute inability to have a holy heart is inevitably to reign forever over all who are now sinners, and over all creatures who shall hereafter come into being.

Again; if it be now true that there is no power adequate to perform holy love, but that which consists in a right heart, or which is the same thing, holy love, then it has been true in all past time. And then there never was any holiness, except when there was previous holy love, to constitute the power of putting it forth. Which time never was. Holy love never existed before the first holy love, to constitute the power of exercising that love. The same inference also would follow in regard to sin. There never was a sin before the first sin to constitute the power of committing it.

The same reasoning which is employed to prove that sinners have no power to become holy, is just as good to prove that holy beings have never had power to become sinful, which is contradicted by facts.

The same fallacy is involved in assuming that ability to per-

form duty depends on a holy disposition, or a holy state of the heart. To assume that all ability to sin should be founded upon *sin*, is very manifestly a complete absurdity, as well as an impossibility. It is an assumption which confounds the distinction between motives to sin and sin itself, between involuntary feelings and voluntary acts, between states of the sensibility and acts of the will. The supposition implies that sin must exist and come to pass, before there is any ability or power to sin. If it should be said that the disposition, on which ability to sin depends, is native, inherited, or it belongs to the constitution of the soul, then that disposition is necessitated by natural, unavoidable necessity, and therefore cannot be sin. And then, on this ground, all sin would be an impossibility. All which is absurd.

Again; if all ability for holiness depends upon a holy disposition, which is itself holiness, then as we have before seen, duty must be performed before there is or can be any power to perform it. And then all holiness is an impossibility. This same writer has said, "obligation is founded on moral agency."

Reply first. Now by the sinner's moral agency must be meant, either his *sin*, or the powers by which he is constituted a moral agent, and by which he commits sin. The first of these senses is the legitimate and proper meaning of the terms, *the sinner's moral agency*, viz. his sin. If in this sense of the sinner's moral agency, his obligation is founded upon it, then sin is the foundation of his obligation not to commit sin, and to obey God. And the very essence of the sin, which constitutes this foundation of obligation to obedience, is that sinful disposition which constitutes his absolute inability to obey. And if all this were true, then just so long as this foundation of the sinner's obligation continues, if that should be forever, this very foundation of obligation will make it necessary, by the most absolute necessity conceivable, that his obligation should be forever violated. A strange foundation this of moral obligation! Here, then, we again have the monstrous absurdity of necessitated sin — and sin, too, necessitated by the very foundation of the sinner's obligation. Our staunch defender of ultra orthodoxy in

another place has rightly said, "Where there is no obligation, there can be no violation of it, and therefore no sin."

Second reply. Since moral agency consists in the moral actions of moral agents, and must be either holy or sinful, either the fulfilment or violation of moral obligation, moral agency implies that ability which is prerequisite to moral agency, therefore if obligation is in any sense founded on moral agency, it must be because it is founded on the powers prerequisite to moral agency, and implied in that agency. But suppose it should be said, that we have not taken the terms *moral agency*, in the sense intended by the writer. It seems difficult to conceive of any other sense except the one above noticed, viz. those powers which constitute the ability prerequisite to the performance of both sinful and holy acts, and to the formation of either a holy or a sinful character. Indeed, this writer has elsewhere explained the terms moral agency by the terms natural power. So that there seems to be no possible, rational sense, in which obligation is founded on moral agency, except that it is founded on the powers which are prerequisite to moral agency, powers adequate to the performance of duty. Power not adequate to duty is not a foundation of obligation. Adhering to the above position of our author would be giving up the notion that obligation ever transcends ability, and adopting the opposite truth, that ability is commensurate with obligation.

Again; our author has said, in his controversy with Dr. Tyler, "The maxim that obligation and ability are, and must be, commensurate in moral relations, is subversive of all sound doctrine, as well as repugnant to common sense."

Reply. Then all the world is, and ever has been, destitute of common sense; and he who regards obligation as founded upon moral agency, so far as he does this in any rational sense, is in the same predicament. The meaning of this maxim, so thoroughly repudiated by this writer, is simply this, what ought to be done, can be done. Obligation rests on ability adequate to fulfil it. Where this ability is wanting, no foundation can be found for any obligation whatever. Nothing can be the present duty of any being, which transcends his present power to obey.

Again; in support of the dogma of *absolute* inability, our author has said: "Disposition, or state of heart, enters largely into ability to do moral acts;" and "ability is founded on disposition." From which it follows, that the sinner's state of heart, inclination, desires, motives, and disposition constitute an absolute inability to obey God; and yet this '*inability is the sinner's crime, — the very essence of his criminality, — it is sin itself, in the most aggravated and malignant form.*'

If this be so, then again we have it, that power to sin is founded on sin, in its most aggravated and malignant form. And this involves the fatal absurdity of confounding sin itself with the power which is *prerequisite* to all sin. And then the *first* sin of a moral agent must come upon him, without his having any power to commit or avoid it; and then all his *future* sins also must be committed by a natural, unavoidable, invincible necessity. And then farewell forever to all moral distinctions, and with them all common sense besides.

In further support of the dogma of inability, and in opposition to the doctrine that men have power adequate to the performance of their duty, this writer has alleged that this latter doctrine tends to the following errors: —

Error 1. The doctrine of ability consisting in power adequate to the performance of duty, must drive its advocates "to downright Arminianism." "There is a family likeness [using the *argumentum ad invideam*] between the power of contrary choice, self-determining power, and natural ability." If by self-determining power be meant power to form one's own moral character, so as to be good or bad, by originating or performing moral acts (and not the power to determine choice by a previous choice, and that by one still previous, and so on forever, and thus involving the impossibility of an infinite series), then the power of contrary choice, the self-determining power, and natural ability, are one and the same power. This power is the glory of a moral agent when employed in serving God, and need not to be ashamed of itself, only when employed in the commission of sin. If Arminius *did* believe this, or any other truth, that is no reason why another man should *not*.

Error 2. Dr. Harvey says: "If God requires nothing of men that they have no power to do, why should they not feel independent? They are so in fact, and why should they not enjoy it?" Answer. The doctrine that in God we live and move and have our being, that God creates and sustains moral agents, with power adequate to do what he requires, is the true doctrine of our dependence as *creatures*, and is an utter denial of our independence. As to our dependence as *sinners*, so far as sinners are dependent on God for the gracious influences of his spirit to overcome their obstinacy in sin, they originate that dependence themselves, by their being so persevering in their wickedness. Take away from them their power of obedience to God, and then they will have no power to persist in *dis*obedience. Therefore, the doctrine of *adequate* power is essential to correct views of our dependence, as *sinners*, on God for renewing and sanctifying grace, while it also recognizes our dependence as creatures.

Error 3. Another alleged error, consequent upon the doctrine of adequate ability, is, that "men, in their natural state, are prompted, by a conceit of natural ability, to regard the government of God as partial and unjust." "It is a doctrine that exalts man against God, and strengthens in sinners a spirit of pride and rebellion." Answer. Just the opposite of all this is obviously true. If God holds men liable to an adequate penalty for not doing what he requires, justice makes it necessary that he should render them able, by giving to them and by upholding in them power adequate to do what he continues to require of them, or the mind of man is incompetent to know or conceive what justice is. That God should not require of men any duty beyond their power to perform is essential to his justice; and when sinners see that he does not do this, they know that for all their pride and rebellion they have no justifying excuse, and therefore the tendency of this doctrine is to exalt God and abase the sinner.

Error 4. Again, it is said: "The idea of this power will tend to blind [the sinner] to his guilt, to quiet his conscience, and make him feel that the remedy is in his own hands. . . . He will be

ready to say to himself, what do I care for the guilt, so long as I have power to do all that God requires?" Answer. So far is this from the truth, that the doctrine of power adequate to the discharge of duty is absolutely essential to the foundation of obligation, and therefore to any just sense of guilt, and to the self-condemning power of conscience. This doctrine gives to conscience such a power to bite and sting as no other doctrine can. On no other ground can it be said to the sinner, "Thou hast destroyed thyself." As to the remedy being in their own hands, if men had not power adequate to do their duty, no duty would be binding, and so they could violate no obligation, and in such a case they could not sin, and therefore they could not need a remedy. One part of the remedy which sinners need is an atonement. Power to do all that God requires is not power to atone for sin. This God never requires. Without an atonement and without repentance, the sinner must suffer the penalty of a violated law, which he had power to obey, and which he ought to have obeyed. So that if he neither cares for his guilt, nor repents of his transgressions, he must suffer the just penalty of his deeds. True, pardon is offered him; but he must accept, he must comply with the conditions of pardon by repentance and faith in Christ, or he cannot escape condemnation. But how is he to do this, the very thing which God requires, with no power to do it? Without the power of doing what God requires, no being could be a sinner to need a remedy from sin, nor could any such being be benefited by the remedy which God has provided for sinners. Therefore, the doctrine that God requires no more of us than he has given us power to perform, does not put it in the power of a sinner to provide any remedy for his past sins.

Error 5. Again, it is alleged that Felix was a believer in the doctrine of adequate power. "He thought he had power to do all that God required, or he would never have lost the opportunity which he had. And this doctrine was the cause of his eternal ruin." Answer. The logic of this is, that had Felix known that he had no power to do what God required, he would not have lost his opportunity to do what he had no power to do.

If he had known that he had no power to obey God, he would have obeyed him at that time and place, and thus escaped eternal ruin. Such reasoning will never convince the world.

Error 6. Once more. To cap the climax of objections to the doctrine of *adequate power*, it is asked on this ground, "What need of Christ?" Answer. Do felons and murderers stand in no need of pardon, because they could have kept the laws which they have broken? or do they refuse a pardon for such a reason? Do sinners, who have violated the commandments of God in all their moral doings, stand in no need of salvation through Christ, because that in all the law and the prophets they are required to love God no more than they can, no more than with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their strength, and with all their mind? If they do not, for this reason, need a Saviour, "then is Christ dead in vain, and our faith is also in vain, and the gospel is without meaning." Surely an objection which leads to such results is groundless. The doctrine that God requires of men no more than he gives them power to perform, is the only doctrine on which his justice in the sinner's condemnation can be vindicated. And this is the only doctrine by which it can be shown that we stand in need of Christ, or that we can be benefited by the remedy which he has provided.

Prof. Park, of the Theol. Seminary, Andover, in the Bibliotheca Sacra, 1851, p. 600, commenting on an article in the Princeton Review, says: "Let us give one illustration of the fact that men must often, whether they will or not, obey those principles of common sense by which he who inspired the Bible meant that we should explain it. . . . Andrew Fuller says, 'I have proved that *natural strength* is the measure of men's *obligation* to love God,' and he often repeats, 'we are only *required* to love God with all our strength.' But our worthy reviewer regards this as one of the radical principles of Pelagianism, and remarks: 'If there is any thing of which the sinner has the innate conviction, it is that the heart, the affections, his inherent moral dispositions, are beyond his reach; that he can no more change his nature than he can annihilate it.' Does this gentle-

man, then, who will, we trust, admit the sinner's obligation to be holy, agree with the advocates of 'ability commensurate with obligation?' No, not always; not in some of his theorizings, not at the moment of controverting that truth. But what will he say as a *man?* Can a child be under obligation to lift a mountain with his unaided hand? or to see through the globe with his unaided eye, or to hear the conversation of the antipodes with his unaided ear? 'By no means,' our critic will respond, 'for the maxim that ability is commensurate with obligation does apply to external acts.' Very well. The first step is gained. Can a child be under obligation, then, to learn all the languages of the world in one day, or to understand all the sciences in one hour? 'By no means,' our reviewer will answer, 'that old maxim does apply to intellectual operations.' Very well. Then a second step is gained. Now for the third. You will say that 'the maxim has no more to do with the obligations of moral acts than the axioms of geometry have,' nothing at all, then, to do with moral acts! This is sweeping enough. But let us see. Can a man be under moral obligation to love God this moment with a love *infinitely* more ardent than that of the highest angel? Can he be under obligation to love the universe with a benevolence equal to that of God himself? Can the infant of a day be under moral obligation to exercise as much of holy feeling as is exercised by him who is omnipotent? Are not these moral acts? You have wisely conceded that a creature cannot 'be required to create a world, nor an idiot to reason correctly.' Why not? Because *in these things* power must be equal to duty. But can a creature be under obligation to *annihilate* the world, or to annihilate his own nature? Is he able to annihilate himself? No. And yet he is equally unable to make himself a new heart. Is he, then, required to perform this impossibility? And if not required to repent, does he disobey any requisition in not repenting? Does he sin? Now we know we shall get the right answer at last. We know there is a *vis medicatrix* curing the soul as well as the body of its disorders, and working itself through all sorts of metaphysics, and now it forces from the

Biblical Repertory words which 'end the strife.' '*Man cannot be under obligation to do what requires powers which do not belong to his nature and constitution.*' Still again it affirms: . . . 'The unfortunate and improper use of the word "necessity" by Edwards and his followers, has done more to prejudice the minds of sensible men against his system than all other causes. According to the proper usage of language, liberty and necessity are diametrically opposite; and to say a thing is necessary and at the same time free is a *contradiction in terms*. Certainty and necessity are not the same; for though every thing necessary is certain, every thing certain is not necessary. Volitions in certain given circumstances may be as certain as physical effects, but volitions are free in their very nature. A necessary volition is an absurdity, a thing inconceivable. To call this certainty a "moral necessity," a "philosophical necessity," will forever mislead and create confusion of ideas in the most exact thinkers.'"

Now we may safely conclude, 'Impenitent sinners are *able* to *repent*, and cast away all their transgressions, whereby they have transgressed against God, and make for themselves a new heart and a new spirit as God requires them to do;' because, according to Andover and Princeton, and all the world besides, not even excepting Dr. Harvey himself, the compiler of the *East Windsor* creed, and notwithstanding all the denials of the doctrine made at Princeton and by Dr. H. ability is commensurate with obligation; and this maxim does extend, as far as obligation does, to external, to intellectual, and to all moral acts of every kind.

In this opponent of Dr. Tyler we have another illustration of the fact that, willing or unwilling, men must often obey the principles of common sense in which this maxim is founded. This gentleman has said, "I consider the maxim, that ability and obligation are and must be commensurate, in moral relations, as subversive of all sound doctrine, as well as repugnant to common sense;" and yet, after all, he is compelled in the exercise of common sense, to assert the opposite truth, viz. that "obligation is founded upon moral agency," i. e. upon the powers of a moral agent, or upon "natural power," as he elsewhere

uses the term moral agency to mean.* "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore, every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." Matt. 3: 10. "Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" Gal. 4: 16.

In confirmation that ability must be regarded as commensurate with obligation, we adduce the following from a sermon on ability, by Dr. Tyler, and from the creed to which he was at the time bound to conform, and which ought to be regarded as good authority by the Pastoral Union, of Connecticut, and by the friends of the East Windsor Theological School.

Dr. Tyler in this sermon lays down the doctrine that "God does not require of men, what they have *no power* to perform." — p. 9. In support of this doctrine, he says, "My hearers, can you feel that it would be right for God to require of you what you have absolutely no power to do? Can any rational creature in the universe think it would be right?" — p. 11. "Does God punish his creatures eternally, for not doing what they have no power to do?" — p. 12. "The divine commandments . . . are all limited by the faculties of those on whom they are imposed. God does not require us to make any new faculties or to employ in his service those which we do not possess. All that he requires, is that we should serve and glorify him to the extent of the powers which he has given us." — p. 14. "God does not require us to love him more than with *all* our heart, soul, strength, and mind."

Again; "It has been said that mankind have destroyed their power. . . . But I would ask, have they destroyed their power? Have they put out the light of reason, that they cannot know their duty? Have they extinguished their conscience, that they cannot feel their obligation? Have they annihilated the power of volition, that they cannot choose between good and evil? In short, have they destroyed their rational nature?" — p. 12.

This *language* goes the whole length of what we have claimed, on this topic, whatever the writer's meaning may be,

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* See Harvey's Second Letter to Dr. Tyler.

and however inconsistent with this, other things, he has elsewhere said, may be.

Again; Dr. Tyler, in his letter of 1855 to Dr. Harvey, in defence of this sermon on Ability, says: "The creed of the Pastoral Union shows . . . that they did not regard the doctrine of the sinner's natural ability to be an error; for they inserted it in their creed as a truth to be maintained. This creed shows also in what form sound New England men were in the habit of maintaining this sentiment, which is the very form in which it is maintained in my discourse. 'Man has understanding and natural strength to do all that God requires of him.' Or what is the same, 'God does not require of men what they have no power [strength] to do.'" *

"I am aware that it may be that your views on this subject have undergone a change. . . . If this be so, I would inquire whether we might reasonably expect some recantation from yourself, before you proceeded to condemn others for no other crime but that of continuing to follow your example? Permit me to bespeak some forbearance, on your part, towards those brethren who have not yet been able to see that the change is for the better, and who still adhere to that form of sound words which you prepared for them twenty years ago."

Dr. Harvey, by his own admission, was the author or compiler of this statement quoted by Dr. Tyler from the East Windsor creed. In his second letter to Dr. Tyler he says, "that the creed of the [Connecticut] Pastoral Union was compiled by me, I believe is true."

We leave our readers to judge of the attitude in which these facts place the East Windsor school and its supporters.

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* Quoted from the East Windsor creed compiled by Dr. Joseph Harvey, to which the professors are required yearly to give their assent. It has been claimed by the friends both of Dr. Tyler and the friends of Dr. Harvey, that Dr. Harvey in this controversy was triumphant in the argument against Dr. Tyler, and in support of the doctrine that *God does require of impenitent men what they have no power to perform.*

NOTICE OF M'COSH ON LIBERTY, CAUSATION, AND VIRTUE.

The Method of the Divine Government, by Rev. James M'Cosh, LL. D., Professor of Logic and Metaphysics in Queen's College, Belfast, Ireland, fifth ed. Edin., we have examined with the deepest interest and much delight. This work proves its author to be an original, comprehensive, profound, and discriminating thinker.

From this work we make the following citations, partly in confirmation of what we regard as truth, and partly in illustration of what we esteem as erroneous. Prof. M'Cosh holds himself to be a necessarian, according in this point substantially with Edwards, in opposition to Sir Wm. Hamilton, Cousin, etc. Yet while speaking of 'necessarians, even of the highest order, as afraid of making admissions to their opponents,' he says, "we believe that none of them has fully developed the phenomena of human freedom." "Now we hold it to be an incontrovertible fact, and one of great importance, that the true determining cause of every given volition is not any mere anterior incitement, but the very soul itself by its inherent power of will. He has not scanned the full phenomena which consciousness discloses, who denies the real potency of the will, — a potency above all special volitions, — and the true power exercised in producing these volitions." We would rather say, exercised in these volitions. — Divine Government, fifth ed., p. 541.

This seems to us to be a full, clear, and concise statement of the liberty of the will.

Again we read, p. 271, "There is an essential freedom implied in every exercise of the will. For the proof of this we appeal to the consciousness, the universal consciousness." "The mind has not only the power of action, but the anterior and far more important power of choice." "It is implied further that the choice lies within the voluntary power of the mind." And yet after all this, this author professes to be a necessarian, and holds to "the reign of causation in the will." Here, then, we

would ask our author how an act of the will is an effect? and what is its cause? Should he say, the will itself, — the power to choose. We reply, power is not cause till it is exerted. An exertion of the will is an act, and not an effect produced by, and therefore consequent upon, an act, or the action of a cause. To say that an act is an effect produced by a *cause*, i. e. by the action of power, — an act produced by an act, seems to be not a very metaphysically accurate use of language, and liable to occasion confusion of ideas. An act implies an agent, as thought a thinker. An agent is a cause when by his acts he produces effects. (See q. 25.)

Again; our author says, "We are happy to find our views on this subject [moral qualities] coinciding with Dr. Chalmers. 'We would now affirm,' says he, 'the all-important principle that nothing is moral or immoral which is not voluntary.'" — p. 310. We think it a just criticism which Prof. M'Cosh makes upon Dr. Chalmers, that "he has confounded the will in some of its exercises with mere sensibility," and yet that this criticism is truly applicable to the learned Professor himself, and to most other writers on ethics. For example, our author just before he makes this criticism on Chalmers, says (pp. 309, 310), "There is an act of the will wherever there is . . . preference, . . . wherever there is . . . desire." And then, "To prefer pleasure to pain, honor to disgrace, society to solitude," he gives as acts of will. Now is it in the power of the human mind not to desire pleasure in preference to pain? If not, then how is this desire a choice, — an act of the will?

A stricter line of demarkation between the voluntary and involuntary, — the phenomena of the will and those of the sensibility, between created or inherited constitution and moral character than has yet generally been drawn, is greatly needed; also between generic, predominant purposes (which constitute character) and subordinate, specific volitions, which receive their character from the generic. A clear perception and statement of the two facts revealed in consciousness, viz. the *desire* of happiness is the comprehensive motive to all possible voluntary action right or wrong, and that happiness is the *ultimate*

object of all possible voluntary action, would give strength and firmness to some of the positions taken in this work of Prof. M'Cosh's.

Again; on page 313 our author says, "The field of possible virtue and vice is wide as the domain of the will. Virtue may consist in other mental affections besides mere benevolence." How can this last affirmation be correct? Benevolence is right action of the will, and must include all right action of the will (see qs. 158–176). There is a benevolent love of God, and a benevolent hatred of sin, and a benevolent as well as a just determination to punish transgressors, and the justice of this determination consists in its benevolent regard to the highest general good.

Again; Prof. M'Cosh remarks, "If the supporters of this ethical system, or the greatest happiness principle, had so stated it as to represent the intent to produce utility, or the purpose to do a beneficial act, as constituting a virtuous action, their views would not have been inconsistent with the proposition now laid down." — p. 308. This is just precisely what the doctrine of benevolent utility implies. We quote once more, "Wayland's work [on moral science] will continue to be reckoned a standard one, even by those who do not accord altogether with his theory of virtue." — p. 318. In our view it is a praise to Dr. Wayland's work that in practical ethics his reasonings are based upon the theory he has rejected in the first part of his treatise. This is only the common, the necessary fate of writers who reject the true theory of benevolent utility.

Notwithstanding all that we admire in "The Method of Divine Government," we cannot see the self-consistency of its author when he says, "We have endeavored to show that there is a holy quality in virtuous action itself, separate from all its tendencies or results; and that the human mind is led by its very nature and constitution to commend that quality [*independently of the consequences* which may follow from the one or the other." — p. 326.

Reply. When we approve of the character of Jesus Christ, in that "he went about doing good," do we have no respect to

the good which was accomplished by, and was consequent upon, his benevolent design? It is impossible that we should not. "God has not left himself without witness, in that he did good, sending us rain from heaven, filling our hearts with food and gladness." When this witness testifies to us, through our gladness, of the goodness which produces it, do we not think of the consequences of God's benevolence? When we witness one man executing his design to injure another in acts of injustice and cruelty, causing pain, poverty, anguish, and death; in condemning his malice, have we no respect to its consequences, — its designed consequences? — no respect to what he has done? The question answers itself.

Of the method of investigating the mental as well as the material sciences, the Professor very justly says, "In the one branch as in the other there should be an orderly observation of facts." "The only essential difference between the two lies in this, that in one we take the senses, and in the other, consciousness, as our informant." — p. 289.

We think if this author should read and fully appreciate the views of Dr. Edwards, and his explanations of his father's views, which were his own, the Professor would not judge as he now does, that "Edwards's theory fails in giving a proper foundation of justice." — p. 318. We would take this occasion to record the saying of Dr. Emmons, that "the elder Edwards had the most reason, while the son was the greatest reasoner."

Just before the printing of these sheets was completed, "*The Intuitions of the Mind*," a work of very distinguished ability, was, by a friend, commended to our notice. In this work we find the freedom of the will stated with a very satisfactory prominence and clearness. For example:

"The will is free. In saying so, I mean to assert not merely that it is free to act as it pleases. . . . I claim for it an anterior and higher power, a power in the mind to choose, and when it chooses, a consciousness that it might choose otherwise." This is what we call power of the contrary choice. "It is a first truth equal to the highest, to no one of which will it ever yield.

It cannot be set aside by any truth whatever, not even by any other first truth, and certainly by no derived truth." "It is alone in the sanctuary of the will, that freedom is to be found." — pp. 308, 309.

Prof. M'Cosh has other statements on this topic, full, clear, and explicit. It is difficult to conceive how any statement could be more so. He speaks of the *self-acting mind.* But he holds to the law of causation in the will. His statements on this point, are indeed modestly made, but, by no means are they so clear and sure, as those are in regard to freedom. We cannot avoid the impression that there is a degree of faltering in his statements of the law of causation in the acts of the will, and it seems very becoming that there should be, when there is at the present such an array of the ablest minds who are conscious of the strongest conviction that the law of causation does not extend to the acts of the will. For illustration of these remarks, take the following: "I am inclined to say that causation must have some sort of place in the will, as in all other creature action. But causation in regard to the will, may be of a totally different character from causation in acts of intelligence and feeling."

"While our intuitions seem to me to say that causation has a place even in voluntary acts, it does not say what is the nature of that causation. This is to be determined by an inductive inquiry into the operations of our voluntary acts. And here we are met at once by the fact that man has freewill. This fact cannot set aside the other fact, that our volitions are caused; but as both are facts, the one must be so stated as to be seen not to be inconsistent with the other. And when we contemplate our volitions by the light of consciousness, we discover at once that causation does not operate in the will, as it does in the material universe, or even in our intellectual and emotional actions." — pp. 193, 194.

Why, then, should it be called causation, since it is so totally different from all that is called causation everywhere else? It appears to me that the will acts upon *occasion* of the motives presented to the mind, and not by *causation.* Can the action of a self-acting mind and causation of those acts, go together? If

our acts are caused, must they not unavoidably be what they are caused to be? And if this be so, then where is the power of contrary choice, or the power of any *choice* at all, or of any ground of responsibility? We cannot see.

We seem to be conscious that one of two things must be true, either we do not understand our author's statements of the law of causation of the acts of the will, or else they are inconsistent with the freedom of the will. They appear most surely to involve a plain contradiction. Here we must let the matter rest, till we obtain further light.

In the manly, catholic, scholarly spirit, in which "The Intuitions" are written, Prof. M'Cosh says, "I will most willingly listen to any one who will give a better account — that is more in accordance with our constitution." — p. 312. This is what we have above tried to do. If the professor was in circumstances that he could lend an ear to our suggestions, we would invite his attention on one point, to the words of an author whose opinions we know he would feel bound to respect.

We copy from '*The Intuitions.*'

"In all classifications of the powers of the mind which have the least pretensions to completeness, there has been a recognition of another class, under the name of the will or feelings, or the erective [rousing] or motive powers; they may perhaps be best designated as the motive or moral powers, so as to embrace unequivocally the functions of the conscience." — p. 279. "They are at least, three in number, the Appetencies,— including the Emotions, — the Will, and the Conscience."

"There are native APPETENCIES [constitutional desires] of the MIND leading to EMOTIONS. Man is so constituted that he is capable of being swayed in will, and so in action, by certain motives, that is, by the contemplation of certain objects or ends, while others do not influence him. It would serve a very important end to have a classification of these, that is, of [all] the springs of human will and action. . . . In the absence of any arrangement sanctioned by metaphysicians generally, it must suffice to mention some of the principal motives."

"1. Mankind are evidently inclined, involuntarily and voluntarily, to exercise every native power, — the senses, the mem-

ory, the imagination, the power of language, the various rational powers, such as abstraction, comparison, causality, the emotional, voluntary and moral capacities." "2. Whatever is contemplated as capable of securing [*pleasure* is felt to be desirable, and whatever is apprehended as likely to inflict [*pain* [we desire should be] avoided." "3. There are certain appetencies in man bodily and mental, which crave for [*gratification*, and this independent of the [*pleasure* of their indulgence. Of this description, are the appetites of hunger, thirst, and sex, and the mental tendencies to seek for knowledge, esteem, society, power, property," etc. — pp. 280, 281. "4. Man is impelled by an inward principle more or less powerful in the case of different individuals, and varying widely in the objects desired, to seek for [pleasure in contemplating] the beautiful in inanimate or in animate objects, in grand or lovely scenes in nature, in statues, paintings, fine composition in prose or poetry, and in the countenances or forms of man or woman." — p. 281. "5. It is not to be omitted that the moral power in man is not only (as I hope to show) [*a knowing and judging* faculty [and therefore an intellectual power], it has a prompting energy, and leads us when a corrupt will does not interfere, to such acts as the worship of God and beneficence to man, done because they are right." "6. Whatever is appetible we may wish that others should [*enjoy*, while we may desire that they should be preserved from all that is unappetible, such as restraint, pain and sin. Man is so constituted as to be stirred to desire and prompted to action by the contemplation of other beings to whom he is related, such as God when he knows him, and his fellow men, more especially certain of his fellow men, such as his countrymen and kindred, and those who have bestowed favors upon him. I must ever set myself against the miserably degrading doctrine of those who represent man as utterly selfish in his [*constitution*, and capable of being swayed by no other considerations than those which promise pleasurable gratifications to be realized by himself." — p. 282. "The appetencies, native and acquired, stir up emotion, which is called forth by an apprehension of objects as fitted to [*gratify* or disappoint these appetencies. Let us call whatever accords with them the appetible [desirable] and what-

ever runs counter to them, inappetible [impossible to be desired]; then the law is that the appetible, when in prospect, calls forth hope, and when realized, [*joy;* whereas, the inappetible, when in prospect, excites fear, and when realized, sorrow," pain, suffering. — p. 283.

"It should be observed, that while the mind is impelled by such appetencies towards certain objects, it has not necessarily before it the general principle by which it is actuated, nor indeed a general idea of any description. It contemplates an individual object, as about to give it pleasure, or about to add to its power or fame, and it at once longs for [desires] it without generalizing its aim. Here, as in other cases which have passed under our notice, the mind is actuated by principles which are not before the consciousness, as principles." Very good. We wish all we have written in this treatise to be understood in the light of what is said in this paragraph, if we understand it.

"Properly speaking, the will does not furnish incitements; these [all] come from the appetencies which we have just been considering." We must stop quoting, though tempted very strongly to continue.

If what seems to us the inconsistency of the above quoted statement of the 3d class of motives were removed, then we should have entire, what we consider the foundation of our whole doctrine as to benevolent rectitude and utility, namely, that DESIRE *of* HAPPINESS *includes all possible motive for voluntary action, right or wrong.* Can there be a *craving* for *gratification* independent of the *pleasure* to be secured by indulgence? Is not gratification and pleasure substantially the same thing? Most surely; if not, we do not understand our own consciousness. That such acts as the worship of God and beneficence to man should be done because they are right, when being regarded as right because they tend and are intended to glorify God, and *ultimately* to promote the happiness of sentient beings in general, is all consistent with the doctrine of benevolent utility and rectitude. So that gratification, pleasure, enjoyment, happiness, blessedness, felicity, or whatever it may be termed, is, and must be, in point of time, the ultimate subjective and objective object in which all virtuous, benevolent, holy action must terminate.

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